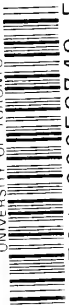
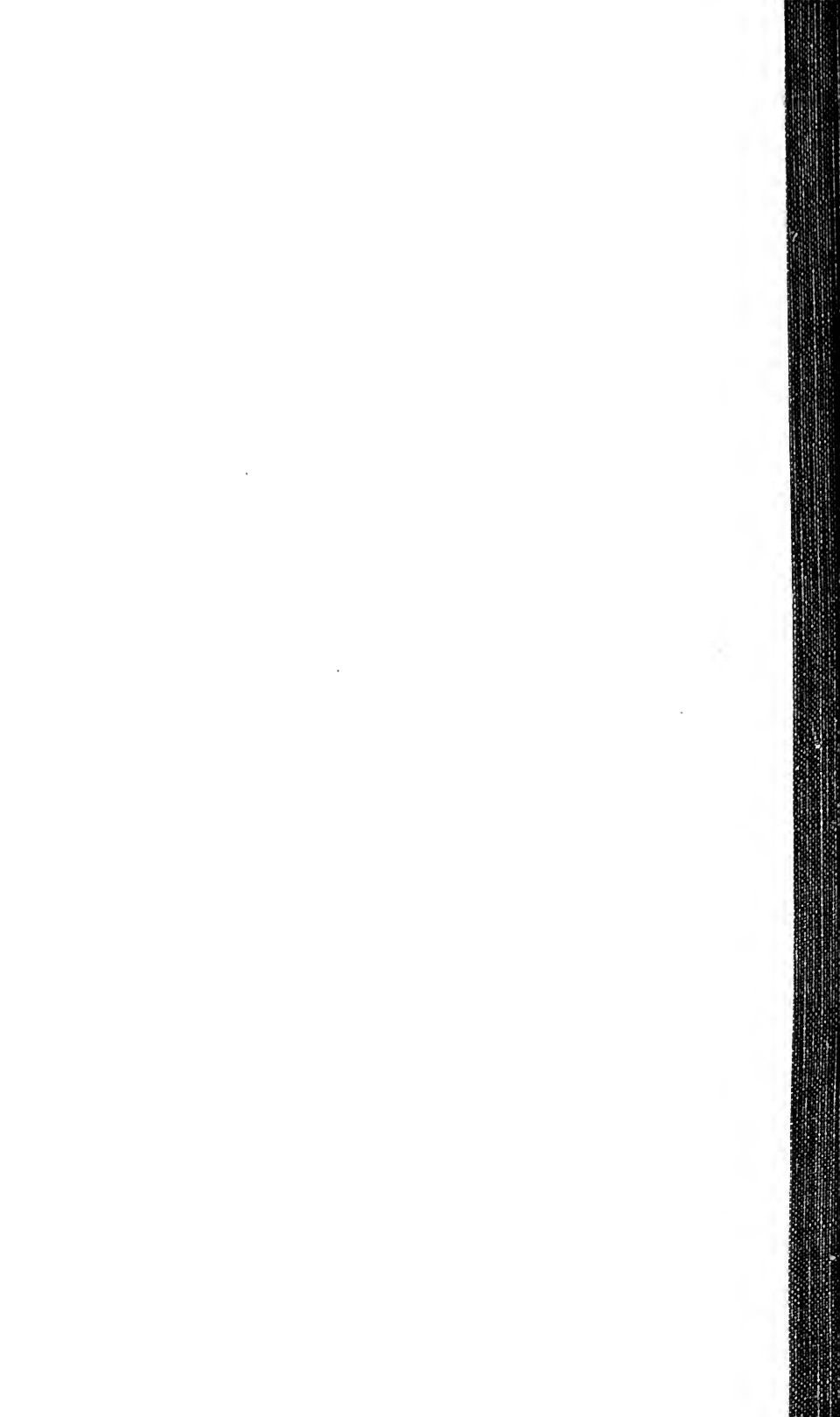


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LYDGATE'S FALL OF PRINCES

EDITED BY
HENRY BERGEN

PART III.
(Books VI.-IX.)



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LYDGATE'S FALL OF PRINCES

PART III.

BOOKS VI.-IX.

THE DAUNCE OF MACHABREE

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ERRATA

P. 733, line 2172: *read* thassaut.

P. 889, line 2363: *for* epesial *read* especial.

THE FALL OF PRINCES

BOOK VI

[Here Bochas sitting in his studie alone writeth a grete processe, how Fortune like a monstrous ymage hauyng an hundred handys appered vn to him and spak / and Bochas vn to hir making betwixt hem bothe many grete argumentys & resouns of Fortunys chaunces.]¹

IN his studie allone as Bochas stood, [p. 298] As Bochas stood alone in his study, pen in hand, musing on the vicissitudes of Fortune,
 His penne on honde, of sodeyn auenture
 To remembre he thouhte it ded hym good,
 How þat no man may hymself assure
 In worldli thynges fulli to recure
 Grace of Fortune, to make hir to be stable,
 Hir dayli chaungis been so variable.
 She braideth euer on the chaunteplure:
 Now song, now wepyng, now wo, now gladnesse,
 Now in merthe, now peynis to eendure,
 Now liht, now heuy, now bittir, now suetnesse,
 Now in trouble, now free, now in distresse,
 Shewyng to vs a maner resemblaunce,
 How* worldli welthe hath heer non assuraunce.
 Whil Bochas pensiff stood sool in his librarie
 With cheer oppressid, pale in his visage,
 Sumdeel abashed, alone & solitarie,
 To hym appered a monstrous ymage,
 Partid on tweyne of colour & corage,
 Hir riht[e] side ful of somer flours,
 The tothir oppressid with wyntris stormy shours.
 Bochas astonid, feerful for to abraide
 Whan he beheeld the wonderful figure
 Of Fortune, thus to hymself he saide:
 "What may this meene? is this a creature
 Or a monstre transffoormyd ageyns nature,
 Whos brennyng eyen sparklyng of ther liht
 As doon sterris the frosti wyntres niht?"

8
4

8
12

16
20

24
28

2. on] in H. 6. 1st to] om. H.
 9. song now wepyng] syng now wepe H. 12. 1st in] om. H.
 14. How] No B, J, H, R 3, H 5, P. 17. abaissed R.
 22. abraide] brayde R.

¹ MS. J. leaf 121 recto.

- Her face was
cruel and terri-
ble, her hair
untressed, her
figure loathsome,
and she had
100 hands.
- And of hir cheer[e] ful good heed he took,
Hir face seemyng cruel & terrible,
And bi disdeyn[e] maneyng of look,
Hir her vntressid, hard, sharp & horrible, 32
Froward of shappe, lothsum & odible.
An hundred handis she hadde on ech part
In sondri wise hir giftes to depart.
- which she en
up to heu-
estate and cast
them down into
adversitey.
- Summe off hir handis lefft up men alofte 36
To hih estat of worldli dignite,
Anothir hand griped ful vnsolte,
Which cast another in gret aduersite:
Gaff oon richesse, anothir pouerte, 40
Gaff summe also bi report a good name,
Noised anothir of selaundre &* diffame.
- Her garment
was of many
colours, the
pale blue of
feigned con-
stancy, gold
mingled with
the green of
change,
black for
mourning,
russet brown
for labour;
- Hir habit was of manyfold colours:
Wachet bleuh of feyned stedfastnesse, 44
Hir gold allaied like sonne in wattri shours,
Meynt with liht greene for chaung & doubilnesse.
A pretens red: dreed meynt with hardynesse;
Whiht for clennesse, lik soone for to faille; 48
Feynt blak for moornyng, russet for trauaille.
- all in harmony
with her change-
able nature.
- Hir colours meynt of wollis mo than oon;
Sumwhile eclipsed, sumwhile she shon briht.
Dulle as an asse whan men hadde haste to gon, 52
And as a swalwe gerissh of hir fliht,
Tween slouh & swift; now crokid & now vpriht,
Now as a crepil lowe coorbid doun,
Now a duery and now a champioun. 56
- Sometimes she
is a coward,
sometimes as
bold as a lion;
sometimes
Croesus, some-
times Agamen-
non; to-day a
man, to-morrow
a woman.
- Now a coward, durst nat come in pres,
And* sumwhile hardi as leoun;
Now lik Ector, now dreedful Thersites,
Now was she Cresus, now Agamenoun, 60
Sardanapallus off condicioun;
Now was she mannyssh, now was she femynyne,
Now coude she reyne, now koude she falsli shyne.

34. hundrith H. 42. &] & off B, R.

44. stedfastnesse] stablenesse H, stabilnesse R 3.

45. sonne] golde H. 48. Whiht] which R.

49. 2nd for] off R. 50. meynt] ment H. 53. Swalouh H.

56. and] an R.

58. And] Now B, R, J — as] as a P.

60. 2nd now] now was she H.

Now a mermaide angelik off face,
 A tail behynde verray serpentyne,
 Now debonaire, now froward to do grace,
 Now as a lamb tretable & benigne,
 Now lik a wolff of nature to maligne,
 Now Sirenes to synge folk a-slepe
 Til Karibdis drowne hem in the deepe.

64 Now a mermaid with angelic face and the tail of a serpent; now a lamb and again a wolf.

68

Thus Iohn Bochas consideryng hir figure,
 Al hir fetures in ordre he gan beholde,
 Hir breede, hir heihte, hir shap & hir stature,
 An hundrid handis & armys ther he tolde:
 Wheroff astonid, his herte gan to colde;
 And among alle hir membrs euerichon,
 He sempte she hadde no feet upon to gon.

72 John Bochas looked at her well, and after observing her features one after another, his heart grew cold.

76 It seemed to him that she had no feet to walk upon;

And whil that he considered al this thyng,
 Atween[e] tweyne, as it wer in a traunce,
 She sodenli toward hym lookyng,
 He conceyued be hir contenance, —
 Wer it for ire, wer it for plesaunce,
 Outher for fauour, outhur for disdeyn, —
 Bi the maner she wolde sumwhat seyn.

80 and while he stood as in a trance, she turned to him and said,

84

Lookyng a-scoign as she had had disdeyn, [p. 299]
 "Bochas," quod she, "I knowe al thyn entent,
 How thou trauailest, besiest the in veyn,
 In thi studie euer dilligent,
 Now in the west, now in the orient
 To serche stories, north & meredien,
 Of worthi princis that heer-toforn ha been.

88 "Bochas, I know what you are about, searching out stories of worthy princes,

Summe duellid vndir the pool Artyk,
 Be my fauour vpreised to the sterris;
 Othir vndir the pool Antartik,
 Which in contrarye from vs so ferr is.
 Summe encresid & set up bi the werris,
 Lik as me list ther tryumphes to auaunce;*
 Frownyng on othir, I brouht hem to myschaunce.

92 upon whom I have smiled or frowned.

96

I see the besi remembryng be scriptures
 Stories of pryncis in eueri maner age,
 As my fauour folwed ther auentures,

100 "I have seen you describing their deeds in plain unadorned language,

73. heihte] length R.

77. He] Hym H.

97. to auaunce] tauaunce B.

- Be humble stile set in pleyn langage, —
 Nat maad corious be non auauantage
 Of rethoriques, with musis for to stryue, 104
 But in pleyn foorme ther deedis to descryue.
- diligently giving
 them praise or
 blame, as they
 deserve.
 "Some were
 extolled to
 Jupiter with a
 trumpet of gold.
- In which processe thou dost gret dilligence,
 As thei disserue to yiue hem thank or blame:
 Settest up oon in roiall excellence 108
 Withynne myn hous callid the Hous of Fame, —
 The goldene trumpet *with* blastis off good name
 Enhaunceth oon to ful hih[e] parties,
 Wher Iubiter sit among the heuenli skies. 112
- while others,
 with the blast
 of a sable
 trumpet, were
 plunged down
 from their
 royal estate.
- Anothir trumpet, of sownis ful vengable,
 Which bloweth up at feestis funerall,
 Nothyng briht[e], but of colour sable,
 Fer fro my fauour, dedli & mortall, 116
 To plonge pryncis from ther estat roiall,
 Whan I am wroth, to make hem loute lowe,
 Than of malis I do that trumpet blowe.
- "You have
 concealed noth-
 ing, spared
 neither their
 crowns nor
 their purple
 robes, but given
 them their
 deserts.
- Thou hast writyn & set togidre in gros, 120
 Lik ther desert worldli mennys deedis,
 Nothyng conceled nor vndr[e] couert cloos,
 Spared [not] ther crownys nor ther purpil weedis, 123
 Ther goldene sceptris; but youe to them ther meedis:
 Crownid oon with laureer hih on his hed vpset,
 Other with peruyнке maad for the gibet.
- "Thus I dis-
 tribute my
 gifts, sometimes
 to one, some-
 times to an-
 other, as in a
 game of chance.
- Thus dyuersli my giffes I* departe,
 Oon acceptid, a-nothir is refusid; 128
 Lik hasardours my dees I [do] iuparte,
 Oon weel foorthrid, anothir is accusid.
 My play is double, my trust is euer abusid,
 Thouh oon to-day hath my fauour wonne, 132
 To-morwe ageyn I can eclipse his sonne.
- "And now I
 have come to
 shew you what
 my disposition
 is like: to-day
 I may flatter,
 and frown to-
 morrow.
- Cause of my comyng, pleynli to declare
 Bi good auis, vnto thi presence,
 Is to shewe my maneres & nat spare, 136
 And my condiciouns, breefli in sentence,
 Preued of old & newe experience,
 Pleynli to shewe, me list nat for to rowne,
 To-day I flatre, to-morwe I can weel frowne. 140
106. gret] hi H.
 113. sownis] sown H. 120. &] an R. 123. not] om. R.
 127. I] I gan B. 131. euer] ay H.
 132. my fauoure hath I-wonne J. 138. newe] nex H.

- This hour I can shewe me merciable,
 And sodenli I can be despitous:
 Now weelwillid, hastili vengable,
 Now sobre of cheer, now wood &* furious. 144
 My play vnkouth, my maners merueilous
 Braid on the wynd; now glad & now I mourne;
 Lik a wedircok* my face ech day I tourne.
- Wheryn Bochas, I telle the yit ageyn, 148
 Thou dost folie thi wittis for to plie;
 All* thi labour thou spillest in veyn,
 Geyn my maneres so felli to replie, —
 Bi thi writyng to fynde a remedie, 152
 To interupte in thi laste dawes
 My statutis [and] my custumable lawes.
- Al the labour off philisophres olde,
 Trauaile off poetis my maner to depraue, 156
 Hath* been of yore to seyn lik as thei wolde
 Ouer my fredam the souereynthe to haue.
 But of my lawes the libertes to saue, 160
 Vpon my wheel thei shal hem nat diffende,
 But whan me list[e] that thei shal dessende.
- Whi sholde men putte me in blame,
 To folwe the nature of my double play?
 With newe buddis doth nat ver the same, 164
 Whan premeroles appeere fressh & gay? —
 To-day thei shewe, to-morwe thei gon away;
 Somer afftir of flouris hath foisoun,
 Til Iun with zithes aftir mowe hem doun. 168
- Now is the se calm and blandisshyng; [p. 300]
 Now ar the wyndis comfortable & still;
 Now is Boreas sturdi in blowyng,
 Which yong[e] sheep & blosmys greueth ille. 172
 Whi also shold I nat haue my wille,
 To shewe my-silf now smothe and aftir trouble,
 Sith to my kynde it longeth to be double?

"I am as fickle
 as the wind or
 a weathercock,
 and my ways
 are marvelous.

"It is foolish of
 you, Bochas, to
 try to change
 my habits and
 nature.

"All the labour
 of old philoso-
 phers was of
 no avail against
 me; when I
 desire it they
 must descend.

"Why should
 men blame
 me? Is it not
 the same with
 the changing
 seasons

and the sea,
 now calm, now
 stormy? Why
 should I not
 have my will?

144. &] now B.

147. wedircok] woodcok B (wedircok R, wedirkok H, wethircok J, wedircoke R 3, wedyrcok H 5, wedrecok P).

150. All] And B.

155. labours H, R 3, laboures P.

157. Hath] Haue B.

165. primerolis R, primrollis H, pmerollis R 3, Prymerolis J.

170. comfortable H.

- "No man is so miserable but he hopes that some day I may relieve him. No man so ferre is falle in wrechidnesse 176
 But that he stant in trust to rise ageyn;
 Nor non so deepe plungid in distresse,
 Nor with dispair nor wanhope ouerleyn,
 But that ther is sum hope lefft certeyn 180
 To yiue hym counforte, seruyng his entente,
 To be releued whan me list assente.
- "The flowers and green of spring disappear in August, The erthe is clad in motles whiht & rede;
 Whan Estas entrith with violettis soote, 184
 The greuis greene, & in euery meede
 The bawme fleteth, which doth to hertis boote.
 August passid, ageyn into* the roote
 Be cours of nature the vertu doth resorte 188
 Be reuolucioun to Kynde, I me reporte.
- and only fools blame me for my inconstancy. Who sholde thanne debarre me to be double,
 Sith doubilnesse longeth to me of riht?
 Now fressh with somer, now *with* wyntir trouble, 192
 Now blynd of look, dirk as the cloudi niht;
 Now glad of cheer, of herte murie & liht:
 Thei ar but foolis ageyn my myht that muse
 Or me atwite; thouh I my poweer vse. 196
- "Men must take me as they find me; and they have no right to complain of my doubleness, Seelde or neuer I bide nat in o poynt:
 Men must at lepis take me as thei fynde;
 And whan I stonde ferthest out of ioynt
 To sette folk[es] bakward ferre behynde, 200
 Than worldli men with ther eyen blynde
 Sore compleyne upon my doubilnesse,
 Calle me thanne the froward fals goddesse.
- because it is my nature to be double. "It is no slander to me, for I am the lady and princess of change." Thus bi your writyng & merueilous langage 204
 I am disclaundrid of mutabilite,
 Wheroff be riht I cach gret* auantage,
 Sith dubilnesse no sclaunder is to me,
 Which is a parcel of my liberte, 208
 To be callid, be title off rihtwisnesse,
 Off chaungis newe ladi & pryncesse."
- John Bochas heard with a frightened face all that Fortune said, and then replied meekly: Thus whan Fortune hadde said hir will,
 Parcel declared of hir gouernaunce, 212
 Made a stynt & sobirli stood still.
 John Bochas sat & herd al hir daliaunce,

181. comferte H. 187. into] vnto B.

194. of herte] sadde H.

198. lepis] lopis R, loopis H, J, lopis R 3, lepys H 5, loupes P.

203. the] a H. 206. gret] a gret B, H, R, J, P, R 3, H 5.

Fearful of cheer[e], pale of contenance,
In ordre enprentid ech thyng that she saide, 216
Ful demurli thus he dede abraide.

He took onto hym vertu & corage
Vpon a poynt for to abide* stable:
"Certis," quod he, "lik to thi visage,
Al worldli thyngis be double & chaungable;
Yit for my part bi remembraunce notable* 220
I shal parfourme, sothli yif I conne,
This litil book that I ha[ue] begonne. 224

"Certainly all worldly things are changeable, nevertheless I am going to finish my little book if I can.

And lest my labour deie nat nor [a]palle,
Of this book the title for to saue,
Among myn othir litil werkis alle,
Witb lettres large aboue vpon my graue 228
This bookis name shal in ston be graue,
How I, Iohn Bochas, in especiall
Of worldli princis writyn haue the fall.

"And lest the memory of my labour die, there shall be engraved in large letters above my tomb, how I, John Bochas, have written the Fall of Princes.

Off which emprise the cause to descryue, — 232
This was first ground, I wil it nat denye,
Teschewe slouhthe & vices al my lyue,
And specialli the vice of gloteny,
Which is notice vnto lecherie: 236
This was cheeff cause whi I vndirtook
The compilacioun off this litil book.

"I undertook to write it, that I might avoid idleness and vice, and especially gluttony, the nurse of lust.

Yit bi thi talkyng, as I vndirstonde,
Ech thyng heer of nature is chaungable, 240
Afftir thi sentence, bothe on se & londe;
Yit koude I rekne thynges that be stable:
As vertuous [lyf] abidyng vnmutable,
Set hool to Godward of herte, will & thouht, 244
Maugre thi power, & ne chaungith nouht.

"You say that everything here is changeable of nature: yet certain things, such as virtuous life, are stable in spite of your power.

Thou maist eek callyn [vn]to remembraunce
Thynges maad stable bi grace which is dyuyne, — 248
Hastow nat herd[e] the perseueraunce
Of hooli martirs, which list nat to declyne
Fro Cristis feith til thei dide fyne?
Thi wheel in hem hadde non interesse,
To make hem varie fro ther stabilnesse. 252

"Have you not heard of the holy martyrs? "The turning of your wheel had no power over them.

219. to abide] tabide B, H, R. 222. ful notable B.

228. large] long H. 239. thi] the R. 250. thei] he R, J.

- "A man armed
with virtue,
who trusts in
Christ Iesu, is
proof against
your variaunce!"
- A man that is enarmed in vertu
Ageyn thi myht to make resistance,
And set his trust be grace in Crist Iesu,
And hath al hool his hertli aduertence
On rihtwinesse, force & on prudence,
With ther suster callid attemperance,
Hath a sauconduit ageyn thi variaunce!
- 256
- "Such men pay
no attenc' on to
your wheel,
their trust
stands on faith,
hope and
charity, which
are called
theologic virtues."
- The[i] sette no stoor be thi double whele,*
With supportacioun of other ladies thre;
Ther trust stant nat in mail[ce], plate or stel,
But in thes vertues: feith, hope & charite,
Callid vertues theologic,
Which with foure aiforn heer specefied,
Thi whele & the han vttrili defied.
- 260
- "If I had
wings to fly to
heaven, I should
see that you
had nothing to
do with the
seven planets:
it is only
worldly fools
who call you
a goddess."
- Yiff I with wyngis myhte fleen to heuene,
Ther sholde I see thou hast nothyng to doone
With Iubiter nor the planetis seuene,
With Phebus, Mars, Mercurie nor the moone.
But woorldli foolis, erly, late and soone,
Such as be blent & dirkid with leudnesse,
Bi fals oppynyoun calle the a goddesse.
- 268
- "The virtues
are far removed
from your
domain."
- Giftes of grace nor gifftes of nature,
Almessede[de] doon with humylite,
Loue and compassioun, been ferr out of thi cure, —
Semlynesse, strengthe, bounte nor beute
Vertuousli vsid in ther degre, —
Geyn non of these thi power may nat strechche;
For who is vertuous lite of the doth rechche.
- 276
- "And fools
blame you in
their adversity
only to excuse
themselves."
- Off* thi condiciouns to sette a-nother preeff,
Which foolis vsen in ther aduersite
For excusacioun, as sumtyme seith a theeff,
Whan he is hangid: 'it was his destyne' —
Atwitith Fortune his iniquite,
As thoun she hadde domynacioun
To reule man bi will ageyn resoun.
- 280
- "But I, who
am unable to
solve the prob-
lems of exist-
ence, leave
them to those
who are
scholars by
profession."
- For which I, Bochas, in parti desolat
To determyne such heuenli hid secrees,
To them that been dyuynes of estat
I remitte such vnkouth pryuites;
And with poetis that been off low degrees
- 288

253-3268 are omitted in R. 260. whele] variaunce B.
262. or] nor H. 277. nor] or H.
281. Off] Aff B — condicioun H.

I eschewe to clymbe to hih aloffte,
List for presumpcioun I shold nat fall[e] softe.

But yif I had hid in my corage
Such mysteries of dyuyn prouidence,
Withoute envie I wolde in pleyn langage
Vltre hem be writyng with humble reuerence, —
Predestynacioun nouthur prescience
Nat apperteene, Fortune, vnto the;
And for my part I wil excuse me,

296 "At any rate,
I am sure
that neither
predestination
nor prescience
appertain to
you, Fortune.

And procede lik as I vndirtook,
Aftir that I haue told my mateer,
Of Fall of Princis for to write a book.
But yit afforn[e], yif thou woldest heere,
I desire of hool hert & enter
To haue a copee of princis namys all,
Which fro thi wheel[e] thou hast maad to fall.

304 "And so I
will go on
with my book;
yet I should be
very grateful
for a list of
the names of
all the princes
who have fallen
from your
wheel.

Thi secre bosum is ful of stories
Of sondry princis, how thei ther liff haue lad,
Of ther triumphes & ther victories,
Which olde poetis & philisophres sad
In meetre & prose compiled han & rad,
Sunge ther laudis, ther fatis eek reserued
Bi remembrance, as thei haue disserued.

312 "Your secret
bosom is full of
the stories of
princes whose
praises have
been sung by
the old poets.

Of which I haue put summe in memorie,
Theron sette my studie & my labour,
So as I coude, to ther ences of glorie,
Thouh of langage I hadde but smal fauour,
Cause Caliope dede me no socour.
For which thou hast duryng al this while
Rebuked me of my rud[e] stile.

316 "Some of them
I have myself
put in remem-
brance, although
I am a poor
hand at writing,
and Caliope
has given me
320 no help.

Men wolde acounte it wer a gret dulnesse,
But yiff langage conueid be bi prudence,
Out declared bi sobre auysynesse,
Vndir support fauoured be diffence
Of Tullius, cheef prince of elloquence, —
Sholde mor proffite, shortli to conclude,
Than my stile, spoke in termys rude.

324 "Language
favoured by
the eloquence
of Tully is very
superior to my
rude style.

294. for] of H.
308. fro] frome H.

328

- yet it often happens that good grain is found growing under husks, and good counsel spoken in blunt terms sometimes succeeds where rhetoric fails.
- Yit ofte tyme it hath be felt & seyn,
 Vnder huskes growyng on lond* arable,
 Hath be founde & tried out good greyn; 332
 Vndir rude leuys, shakynge & vnstable,
 Pullid fair frut, holsum & delectable.
 And semblably, wher rethorik hath failed,
 In blunt termys good counseil hath auailed. 336
- "It was through music and philosophy that the commons first became civilized:
- Philosophes of the goldene ages [p. 302]
 And poetes that fond out fressh ditees,
 As kyng Amphiouun with his fair langages
 And with his harpyng made folk of lough degrees, 340
 As laborers, tenhabite first cites; —
 And so bi musik and philosophie
 Gan first of comouns noble policie.
- for music is harmony, and philosophy sprang from prudence, and upon concord and wise policy were built the walls of Thebes.
- The cheff of musik is mellodie & accord; 344
 Welle of philosophie sprang out of prudence,
 Bi which too menys gan vnite & concord
 With politik vertu to haue ther assistance:
 Wise men to regne, subiectis do reuerence. 348
 And bi this ground, in stories men may see,
 Wer bilt the wallis of Thebes the cite.
- "Discord goes hand in hand with diversity, peace with prudent policy, and quarrels were first brought in by you, Lady of Contest and Strife —
- Accord in musik causith the mellodie;
 Wher is discord, ther is dyuersite, 352
 And wher is pes is prudent policie
 In ech kyngdam and euery gret contre.
 Striff first inducid bi thi duplicite;
 For which thou maist, as clerkis the descryues, 356
 Be callid ladi of contekis & of stryues.
- slaughter, debate, froward dissensions and the desolation of towns and countries.
- First wer founde out hatful dyuysiouuns
 Be thi contreued fals mutabilites, —
 Slauhtre, debat, froward discenciouuns 360
 In regiouns, prouynces and cites,
 Desolacioun off townis & contrees,
 Wheroff men hadde first experience
 Bi thi chaungable geri violence. 364
- "It is you who first got men into trouble with your uncouth snares, and made them hate one another;
- Thus bi thoppynyoun of thi wheel most double,
 As ferr be nature as it was possible,
 Ouertwertli thou brouhtest men in trouble,
 Madest ech to other froward & odible 368
 Bi thi treynys vnkouth & terrible,

331. land] ground B.

334. delitable H.

339. kyng]om.H. 346. concord]accorde H. 349. story H.

- Lik a corsour makth coltis that be wilde
 With spore & whippe to be tame & mylde,
 Thus bi the tempest off thyn aduersites,
 To make men mor tame of ther corage. 372
 In [ther] discordes tween kyngdames & cites,
 Afttir the sharpe[nesse] of thi cruel rage*
 Onli bi mene of speche & fair langage, 376
 Folk be thi fraude fro grace ferr exilid,
 Wer be fair speche to vnite reconcilid.
 Peeplis of Grece, of Roome & off Cartage,
 Next in Itaille, with many a regeoun, 380
 Wer inducid bi swetnesse* of langage
 To haue togidre ther conuersacioun,
 To beelde castellis & many roial toun.
 What caused this? — to telle in breeff the foorme, 384
 But eloquence rud peeplis to reffoorme.
 Affor tyme thei wer but bestiall,
 Till thei to resoun be lawes wer constreynd,
 Vndir discrecioun bi statutis naturall 388
 Fro wilful lustis be prudence wer restreynd.
 Bassent maad oon, & togidre [en]cheynyd
 In goldene cheynys of pes and vnite;
 Thus gan the beeldyng of eueri gret cite. 392
 But whan thou medlist to haue an interesse,
 Thei that wer oon to brynge hem at discord,
 To interupte with thi doubilnesse
 Cites, regions, that wer of oon accord, — 396
 Lik as this book can ber [me] weel record,
 Fro the tyme that thou first began
 Thi mutabilite hath stroied many a man.
 Thou causest men to been obstynat 400
 In ther corages & incorrigible,
 Wilful, froward, causeles at debat,
 Ech to other contrarious & odible,
 Them to refourme almost impossible, —
 Til fair[e] speche, voidyng dyuisioun, 404
 Pes reconcilid tween many a regeoun.*

and then you would tame them with aduersity, and afterwards it was fair speech that reconciled them to unity.

"Sweetness of language induced them to consort together and build castles and cities.

"At first they were ignorant, until laws constrained them to reason, and prudence checked their wilfulness.

"But you interfere to bring them into discord, and many a man has been destroyed by your mutability.

"You make men obstinate and wilful, froward and hateful to one another; but fair speech has reconciled many a region.

375. sharp[nesse] sharp J, R 3, H 5, R 2, H 3, H 4 — rage] outrage B, H, H 5, rages J, P.

381. bi] with H — swetnesse] Record B, swiffnesse H — of] of fair J.

383. roial toun] regioun H. 387. to] bi H — be] to H.

401. corage H.

- "No outrage is
so terrible,
nothing so
wrong but it
may be re-
formed by
gracious
language.
- For ther is non so furious outrage,
Nor no mateer so ferr out of the weie, 408
But that be mene of gracious language
And faire speche may a man conveie
To al resoun meckli for to obeie, —
Bi an example which I reherse shall 412
Weel to purpos and is historiall.
- "When Achilles
was in his
wrath nothing
serued to still
the tempest of
his rage but
the sweet sound
of a harp.
- ¶ The hardi kniht, [the] cruel Achilles,
Whan hatful ire assailed his corage,
Ther was no mene with hym to trete of pes, 416
To stille the tempest of his dooful rage,
Sauf onli this, which dede his ire asswage
Bi attempraunce tobeien to resoun,
When of an harpe he herde the suete soun. 420
- "And in like
manner gentle
languaue can
bring men to
peace who were
parted by
division."
- Which instrument bi his gret suet[e]nesse [p. 303]
Put al rancour out of his remembraunce,
Wrestid hym ageyn to al gladnesse,
From hym auoidyng al rancour & greuaunce. 424
Semlabli, faire speche and daliaunce
Set men in reste in rewnys heer & yonder
Bi good langage that wer ferr assonder."
- With these
words Bochas
became more
affable and
spoke pleasantly
about his work,
and besought
Fortune to
help him on
with his book,
- With these woordes Bochas wex debonaire, 428
Toward Fortune as he cast his look,
Withdrouh his rancour & gan speke faire
Touchyng his labour which he upon hym took,
Besechyng hir for to forthre his book, 432
That his name, which was litil knowe,
Be good report myhte be ferther blowe.
- so that his
fame, as yet
shrouded in
darkness, might
shine forth to
all people.
- That his fame myhte ferther spreede,
Which stood as yit shroudid in dirknesse, 436
Bi hir fauour his name forth to leede,
His book to foorthre doon hir bysynesse
Bi good report to yiue it a brihtnesse,
With laureat stremys shad foorth to peeplis all, 440
Bi foryetilnesse that it neuer appall.
- This was the
request that he
made to For-
tune, who after
a little while
began to smile
and answered:
- This was the bille which that Iohn Bochas
Made vnto Fortune with ful humble stile.
Whan Fortune hadde conceyuyd al his* caas, 444
Sobirli stood and gan [to] stynte a while,

421. sootnesse H. 430. to speke H.

444. his] this B. 445. to] om. J.

And glad of cheer[e] aftir she gan smyle
 On myn auctour, & with a fressh visage
 In sentence spak to hym this language: 448

[**Hic loquitur Fortuna.**] ¹

¶ "Soothli," quod she, "I see thi besynesse,
 Of mortal men, how corious that thei bee,
 How thei studie bi gret auisynesse
 Off my secretes for to been preue, 452
 To knowe the conceitis hid withynne me
 And my counsaillies, ye men doon al your peyne,
 Al-be nat lihtly* ye may therto atteyne.

"Truly, I see how curious you men are to learn my secrets, although you do not come by them easily.

In this mateer your witt doth neuer feynte,
 Ymagynyng liknessis in your mynde, 456
 Lik your conceitis ye forge me & peynte,
 Sumtyme a woman with wenges set behynde,
 And portreye me with eien that be blynde. 460
 Cause off al this, breefli to expresse,
 Is your owne coueitous blyndnesse!

"You imagine me in all forms: sometimes a woman with wings, sometimes blind; but the cause of all this is your own covetousness.

Your appetitis most straunge & most dyuers,
 And euir ful of chaung & doubilnesse, 464
 Froward also, malicious & peruers,
 Be hasti clymbyng to worshepis & richesse,
 Alway void of trouthe & stabilnesse,
 Most presumptuous, serche out in al degrees, 468
 Falsli tatteyne to worldli dignites.

"You have strange desires, and you are always full of deceit, malicious and perverse, and ever seeking worldly dignity.

Bochas, Bochas, I parceyue eueri thyng
 And knowe ful weel the grete difference 472
 Hid in thi-silff of woordes & thynkyng,
 Atween hem bothe the disconvenience.
 Hastow nat write many gret sentence
 In thi book to sclauandre with my name,
 Off hool entent my maneres to diffame? 476

"Bochas, I understand and know very well the great difference between your words and thought.

Thou callest me stepmooder most vnkynde,
 And sumtyme a fals enchaunteresse,
 A mermaide with a tail behynde,
 Off scorn sumwhile me namyng a goddesse, 480
 Sumtyme a wich, sumtyme a sorceresse,
 Fyndere off moordre & of deceitis alle;
 Thus of malis mortel men me calle!

"Have you not written many a slanderous sentence about me, calling me an unkind step-mother, a false enchantress, a mermaid with a tail behind, an instigator of murder?"

455. lihtly] likli B — nat] that J, P — may] maynat J, P.

481. wich] wrechch H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 124 verso.

"All this in
despite of me;
accusing my
mutabiliti
when I refuse
your covetous
requests.

Al this is doon in despiht of mee; 484
Bi accusacioun in many sondri wise
Ye ofte appeche my mutabilite,
Namli whan I your requestis do despise,
For tacomplisshe your gredi couetise: 488
Whan ye faille ye leyn on me the wite,
Off your aduersites me falsli tatwite.

"And only to
slander me
you wrote an
unpleasant story
of how I
wrestled with
Glad Poverty,
whom you
favoured, and
now you beg
me to help
you!

And thou of purpos for tesclaundre me
Hast writt vngoodli a contrarious fable, 492
How I wrestled with Glad Pouerte,
To whos parti thou wer fauourable,
Settest me abak, geyn me thou wer vengable,—
Now of newe requerist my fauour 496
The for to helpe & foorthre thi labour!

"As if I were
changeable as a
woman or the
wind! Yet that
is your doctrine.

As-scauns I am off maneres most chaungable,
Off condiciouns verray femynyne;
Now heer, now ther, as the wynd vnstable, 500
Be thi descripcioun and be thi doctryne,
To eueri chaung[e] reedi to enclyne,
As women be & maidnes tendre of age,
Which of nature be dyuers of corage. 504

"However, I
am willing to
help you,

But for to forthre in parti thyn entent, [p. 304]
That of thi book the processe may proceede,
Be my fauour to the accomplishment
I am weelwillid to helpe the in thi neede. 508
Lik thi desir the bettir thou shalt* speede,
Whan I am toward with a benigne face
To speede thy iourne bi support of my grace,

so that both
your name and
your surname
may flourish.
"I will have
you begin with
Saturninus.

That thi name and also thi surname, 512
With poetis & notable old auctours,
May be registrid in the Hous off Fame
Bi supportacioun of my sodeyn fauours,
Bi assistence also of my socours 516
Thi werk texpleite the laurer for to wynne,
At Saturninus I will that thou begynne.

484. is] *om.* J.

491. tesclaundre] to sclauandre H.

495. ageyn H.

509. the bettir thou shalt] thou shalt the bettir B.

[Here reherceth Fortune hir condiciouns vnto
 Bochas shewyng how many oon she enhaunced
 for a tyme/ and anoon after hem sodenly
 ouerthroweth.]¹

¶ Among Romeyns this said[e] Saturnyne
 Was outraious off condiciouns,
 Caused in Roome whan he gan maligne
 Gret debatis and gret sediciouns.
 And bi his froward conspiraciouns
 He was sharp enmy ageyn the prudent iuge
 Callid Metellus,* deuoid of al refuge. 520

Fro the Capitoille fette with myhti hond,
 Fond no socour Metellus in the toun, —
 The same tyme, thou shalt vndirstond,
 How be myn helpe and supportacioun
 Oon that was smal of reputacioun
 Callid Glaueya, in pouert brouht up lowe,
 Maad consuleer, the stori is weel knowe. 528

A seruauant first & almost set at nouht;
 And afftirward I made hym fortunat,
 Lefte neuere til I hadde hym brouht
 Bi a prerogatiff chose of the senat
 To been a pretour, an offise of estat.
 Which also wrouhte be conspiracioun
 To brynge Metellus to destruccioun. 532

Off whos assent ther was also another
 Callid Marius, beying the same yeer,
 Texpleite this* tresoun beying ther [own]sworn brother,
 Which was also that tyme a consuleer.
 I, Fortune, made hem ful good cheer,
 Lik ther desirs gaff hem liberte
 To banshe Metellus out of ther cite. 540

Of the[s] [thre] Romeyns, the first[e] Saturnyne,
 And Glaueya was callid the secounde,
 And Marius, leid out hook & lyne,
 As I haue told, Metellus to confounde. 548

"This said Saturnine was an outrageous person, who caused great trouble in Rome.

"He was an enemy of Metellus at the time Glaucia became consul.

"I made, Glaucia fortunate; he was at first nothing but a servant.

"He, Marius, and Saturnine conspired to banish Metellus,

and I shewed them my favour, that they might later on themselves come to mischief.

525, 27, 39. Metellus B.

531. Glaueya] Glabeya H, Glabeia J, Glaucia P.

532. the] this H.

542. this] ther B.

548. Glaueya] Glabeya H, Glaucia J, P.

¹ MS. J. leaf 124 verso.

To ther purpos I was also founde
 Fauourable to brynge hem to myscheff, 552
 As ther stori sheweth an open preeff.

"They banished
 Metellus, and
 Saturninus pre-
 sumed to be
 called lord and
 king of Rome;

Thei ban[y]shid hym out of Roome toun;
 And Saturnynus bi his subtil werkyng
 Clamb up faste, of hih presumpcioun, 556
 To be callid of Roome lord & kyng.
 I gaff hym fauour bamaner fals smylyng,
 Til at the laste, pleyntli to declare,
 Off his destruccioun I brouht hym in the snare. 560

but all the
 while I was
 deceiving him.

The senatours knowyng the malis
 Of Saturnyn, which made a gret gadryng
 Of sondry folk, castyng in his auys
 Bi ther fauour he myhte be callid kyng. 564
 Al this while off his vpelymyng
 I shewed hym duryng a long[e] space
 Hym to deceyue a benigne face.

"Finally Marius
 arose and
 drove him into
 the Capitol for
 refuge.

Til Marius, a myhti consuleer, 568
 To withstonde his presumpcioun
 Ros with strong hand, & with a knihtli cheer
 Besette his paleis abouten environ,
 Brak his gatis amyddis of the toun; 572
 And Saturnynus, void of al fauour,
 To the Capitoille fledde for socour.

"Marius then
 besieged the
 Capitol, and
 Saturninus,
 brought to
 great distress,
 lost all his
 riches.

He was forbarrid be Marrius of vitaille,
 The Capitoille beseged round aboute; 576
 At the entryng was a strong bataille,
 On outher parti slay[e]n a gret route.
 Thus of my fauour he gan stonde in doute,
 This Saturnynus brouht in gret distresse, 580
 His good achetid, lost al his richesse.

"Experience
 teaches that
 those who
 ascend highest
 on my wheel
 shall descend
 when they least
 expect it; and
 then I laugh at
 them.

Experience ful openli men lereth,
 Such as hiest therupon ascende,
 Lik as the tourn of my wheel requereth, 584
 Whan thei lest weene doun thei shal descende.
 Thei haue no power themsiluen to diffende
 Ageyn my myht, whan thei been ouerthrowe:
 What do I than, but lauhe & make a mowe! 588

556. hih] *om.* H, J, R 3, H 5, P.

575. forbarrid] *so* barrid H.

- ¶ Drusus also born of gret lynage
 And descendid of ful hih noblesse,
 Vnto vertu contraire of his corage,
 Froward founde to al gentillesse;
 Yit chose he was, the stori doth expresse,
 Questour of Asia, an offis of degree,
 For his berth to gouerne that contre.
- But ofte tyme vertu nor gentillesse
 Come nat to heires bi successioun, —
 Exauple in Drusus, the stori berth witnessse,
 Which bothe of corage and disposicioun
 Was euer froward off condicioun.
 For which lat men deeme as thei mut needis,
 Nat afftir berth but afftir the deedis.
- Vertues alle in hym wer set aside:
 Slouh to been armyd, hatid cheualrie,
 Most coueitous, deyncous, ful of pride,
 His deedis froward, ful of trecherie.
 To hih estat I dede hym magnefie,
 Yit al my gifftes in hym ne myhte stretche,
 For heer tofor the, he kometh lik a wrechche.
- He dar for shame nat shewen his visage,
 So ferr disclaundrid is his wrechidnesse,
 Whos couetise and vicious outrage
 Falsli causid bi his doubilnesse,
 Maguldusa, a prince of gret noblesse,
 Betrashed was for meede to the kyng
 Callid Boccus bi Drusus fals werkyng.
- What maner torment or what greuous peyne
 Wer compotent, couenable or condigne
 To hym that can outward flatre &* feyne,
 And in his herte couertli maligne,
 As Drusus dede, which shewed many a signe
 To Maguldusa of loue and freendliheede;
 Vndirnethe fals tresoun hid in deede.
- But Maguldusa, lik a manli kniht,
 Geyn kyng Boccus hath hymself socourid,
 Whan he bi doom was iugid ageyn riht
 Of an olifaunt for to be deuourid.
 Scapid freeli, & aftir that labourid
- [p. 305] “Drusus, born of high lineage and contrary to all virtue was chosen quaestor of Asia.
 592
- 596 “But it often happens that neither virtue nor gentility are inherited by heirs: we must judge men by their actions rather than their birth.
- 600
- 604 “Drusus was lazy, covetous, disdainful and full of treachery. “I could not help him. “Here he comes before you like a wretch,
 608
- and dares not shew his face for shame. He
 612 betrayed Magulsa to Bocchus.
- 616
- 620 “And what torment were appropriate to him who can outwardly flatter and inwardly hate, as Drusus did?
- 624 “But Magulsa, sentenced to be devoured by an elephant, escaped and afterwards slew Drusus in Rome.
 628

595. that] þe H. 596. gentilnesse H. 597. Come] cam H.

614. Magulsa P.

618. competent H, J, R 3, H 5, P. 619. &] or B.

Taquite hymself[e] throuh his hih renoun,
Slouh fals Drusus myd of Roome toun.

"Bochas, men blame me for being the cause of the destruction of Scipio,

¶ Bochas, also, men put the lak in mee,

That I was cause of the destruccion

632

Be my contrarious mutabilite

Off the notable famous Scipioun,

Which in the tyme of Sensoryn Catoun

Gat the tryumphe for many gret victorie

636

To putte his name perpetuel[ly] in memorie.

consul and chief bishop of Rome at the time of the wars between Cesar and Pompey.

For his meritis chose a consuleer

And cheeff bisshop to gouerne ther cite,

To al the senat patroun most enter,

640

Most famous off name and dignite,

Saued Romeyns from al aduersite,

Tyme whan the werre dreedful & despitous

Gan atween Pompeie & Cesar Iulius.

644

"When he stood highest in my favour he was suddenly cast down from my wheel; but it was by the malice of the Romans.

Thus whan the said[e] famous Scipioun

Was thoruh my fauour acountid most notable,

He fro my wheel was sodenli cast doun,

Which neuer in woord nor deede was coupable.

648

But the Romeyns malicious & vnstable, —

Bi ther hangman first cheynid in prisoun,

Aftir rakked, ther geyned no raunsoun.

"They hung his body high aloft for a spectacle, although he had saved them from all aduersity.

Thus he that hadde auailed hem so ofte,

652

To saue hymself fond socour on no side;

His dede bodi thei heeng it hih alofte

For a spectacle longe ther tabide.

Thus gerisshli my giftes I deuide,

656

Stound[e]meel, now freend, now aduersarie,

Rewarde goode with guerdouns ful contrarie.

"My fickleness was well shewn in the fate of Scipio.

This was expert ful weel in Scipioun:

Gan with ioie, endid in wrechidnesse.

660

"I also made Fanaticus, born a churl, ascend to high decree, for my amusement.

Bochas, remembre, mak heeroff mencion,

And off Fanaticus, how I off gentillesse

Made hym ascende to notable hih prowesse;

Yit bookis sey[e]n touchyng his kynreede,

664

Manli of persone, born a cherl* in deede.

"He rose to royal estate by sleight,

For my disport[e] with a glad visage

I sette hym up ful hih upon my wheel,

Gaff hym lordship, out of louh seruage;

668

631. in] on H. 662. gentillesse H, R 3, H 5.

665. born a cherl] a cherl born B, J, P.

To doon hym fauour it liked mē ful weel.
 Wherfor Bochas, his stori euerideel,
 Note it weel, & in especiall
 How he be sleihte cam to estat roiall. 672

Be sleihti feynyng to dyuers folk he tolde, [p. 306] telling people
 How that he spak with Cirra the goddesse how he could
 At eueri hour pleyntli whan he wolde, converse at will
 Of presumpcioun descryued hir liknesse, and how she
 Seide also how that she of hir goodnesse had given him
 Hadde grauntid hym, his staat to magnefie, a spirit of
 Duryng his lyff a sperit off prophecie. 676 prophecy.

And farthermore the peepel for to blynde 680 "He blew fire
 He fantasied bi a crafft vnkouth, in his nutshell
 Withynne a scale, the stori maketh mynde, and said it was
 Of a note to haue fyr in his mouth. a spirit sent
 Blewe it out sparklyng north & south, to him from
 Affermede, wherwith folk wer blent, heaven. 684
 It was a sperit to hym fro heuene sent.

Bi which he wrouhte many gret vertu,
 Gadred peepel til he hadde in deede 688 "Finally he had
 Two thousand cherlis at his retenu, 60,000 followers;
 Which aftirward, his purpos for to speede, and I permitted
 To sixti thousand encreced, as I reede. all, until the
 I suffrid al; seruid hym at the tide country grum-
 Til al the contre gruchchede at his pride. bled at his
 692 pride.

Thouh of berthē he was but a vileyn,
 Roos up of nouht bi sodeyn auenture,
 My geri fauour made hym to be seyn 696 Born a serf, he
 Roial of port, dede his besi cure, rose from
 To reise his baner, wered a cote-armure, nothing;
 And be my gracious supportacioun
 Brouht gret peepel to his subieccioun. 700

At the laste my lust gan to appall,*
 Towardis hym nat beyng fauourable;
 Doun fro my wheel anon I made hym fall,
 For bi Romeyns was sent a gret constable
 Callid Popenna, a prynce ful notable, 704 but at last I
 Which fill on hym, venquissid hym anon, wearied of him
 Slouh and outraied his cherlis euerichon. and made him
 fall from my
 wheel.
 "He was de-
 feated by Per-
 penna and
 hanged, and his
 churles were
 scattered and
 slain.

682. scale] shale J, P. 691. encreced] om. H.
 701. to] om. J, P, H 5 — tappall B, H, R 3.

- "I remain with
no man always.
- Hymself was hangid on an hih gibet;
Summe of his meyne wer cast in prisoun.
Thus to his pride I gaff a gret tripet
And fro my wheel I caste hym lowe down
In his most hiest domynacioun, —
Took non heed wher he dede lauhe or mourne,
For with no man I do alway soiourne.
- 708
- "Bochas, I can
both further
and injure; see
how Athenion,
once a shepherd,
became a rob-
ber.
- ¶ Bochas," quod Fortune, "tak good heed also
How I can bothe foorthre & disauaile:
For example see houh Athenyo,
That whilom was a shepperde in Ytaille,
A brigaut aftir, marchauntis to assaille,
Lay in a-wait beside a gret mounteyn,
Off fugityues he was made a capteyn.
- 712
- "He slew his
lord and broke
out of many
prisons, and
for a tyme I
helped him
gather churls
together and
make war on
Rome.
- Slouh first his lord, a riche senatour,
Bi violence brak many strong prisoun;
And for a tyme I gaff hym gret fauour
To gadre robbours aboute hym enviroun, —
Alle the cherlis of that regeoun
He assemblede thoruh his iniquite,
To holde a werre with Roome the cite.
- 724
- "He besieged
castles and
slew and
robbed through-
out the country
and wore purple
like a
king,
- Beseged castellis, brak down myhti tours,
Slouh & robbede aboute in ech contre,
Spoiled paleis of worthi senatours, —
Title hadde he non sauff title of volunte, —
Took upon hym of pride & cruelte
For to be clad in purple lik a kyng,
Bar a sceptre among his men ridyng.
- 732
- and a coif
embroidered
with rich stones
on his head.
"I laughed to
think of him,
a false robber,
upheld by my
favour.
- Vpon his hed ordeyned for the nonys
His gold her tressid lik an emperour,
A coiffe enbroudid al of riche* stonis —
Me list to lauhhe, that a fals robbour
Be supportacioun of my geri fauour,
Which last nat longe, — for aftir in short while
As is my custum I dede hym begile.
- 736
- "Finally a con-
sul came down
from Rome and
hanged him.
- I suffred hym, made hym feyned cheer,
As I haue do to othir mo ful ofte,
Till down fro Roome was sent a consuleer,
Which took hym proudli & heeng hym hih alofte,
- 740
- 744

709. *is replaced by 702 in H.*

734. purple H. 737. goldher B.

738. coiffe] corff H, coive R 3 — of riche] riche off B.

- His cherlis slayn; & summe of hem nat softe
 In cheynys bounde, for short conclusioun, 748
 Wer dempt be lawe to deien in prisoun.
- ¶ Bi which[e] stori[es], Bochas, thou maist lere
 A gret parti of my condicioun.
 But now in haste a stori thou shalt heere, 752
 How in the yeer fro the fundacioun
 Mor than sixe hundred — I meene of Roome toun —
 Was a gadryng & a gret cumpanye
 Togidre sworn bi fals conspiracye, 756
 Them to withdrawe fro the obeisaunce* [p. 307]
 Of a tribun callid Lodonee,
 Which for knihthod hadde gouernaunce,
 And was sent down fro Roome [the] cite 760
 With myhti hand to reule a gret contre
 Callid Chaumpayne; & pleyntli for to seie,
 The people ther list hym nat obeie.
- Thre score & foure wer of hem in noumbre 764
 That named wer[e] cheeff conspiratours,
 Which that caste hem ther capteyn to encoumbre
 With multitude of theuis & robbours,
 Which ches among hem to been ther supportours 768
 Thre myhti capteyns, off which ther was oon
 Callid Spartharchus, cheuest of echon.
- Gadred cherlis, made hemsiluen strong,
 On an hih hill took ther duellyng place, 772
 Hauyng no reward, wer it riht or wrong,
 To spoille the contre, bestis to enchace.
 I cherished hem with a benigne face
 For a sesoun, & gaff hem liberte 776
 Bi fals raayne to robbe the contre.
- What thyng mor cruel in comparisoun
 Or mor vengable of will & nat off riht,
 Than whan a cherl hath domynacioun!
 Lak of discrecioun bleendith so the siht 780
 Of comouneres, for diffaute of liht,

"From these stories, Bochas, you may learn to know me.

"Now I will tell you how there was a conspiracy about the year 600 of Rome,

when the people of Campania would not obey the tribune.

"There were three score and four chief conspirators, and Spartacus was their captain.

"They gathered churls together, and, sallying forth from a hill stronghold, ravaged the country.

"For a time I helped them; but what is more cruel than a knave who has power to rule!

750. stories] stori J, P.

755. &] om. J, P — gret] om. H.

757. obeisaunce] presence B, J. 759. hadde] & H.

760. the] om. J, H.

770. Spartharchus] Spartachus R 3, Spartacus P (throughout) — cheuest] cheff H.

771. hym silf H. 781. siht] liht H. 782. liht] siht H.

- Whan thei haue power contrees to gouerne
 Fare lik a beeste [that] can nothyng disseerne. 784
- "They were called gladiators, who fought wild animals, and they encamped on Mt. Vesuvius" Gladiatores folkes dede hem calle;
 For ther suerdis wer with steel maad fyn
 For to fihte geyn wylde beestis alle,
 As leouns, beres, bores, wilde swyn. 788
 And the mounteyn wher thei dede lyn
 Callid Venuse, and thoruh ther cruelte
 Slouh & robbede aboute in ech contre.
- "Spartacus was of low birth and came of nothing; and Claudius, who was sent down from Rome to protect the country, was driven away." Spartharchus was ther cheeff capteyn, 792
 Brouht up of nouht & born of lough degre;
 But Claudius, a myhti, strong Romayn,
 Was sent with power fro Roome the cite
 For to diffende & saue that contre, 796
 The hill besegyng afforn hem as he lay:
 He was rebukid, bete & dryue away.
- although many of Spartacus' men were slain. Many of them that kepte the mounteyn
 Wer hurt that day, the stori tellith thus, 800
 Amongis which was slayn a gret capteyn
 That was felawe vnto Spartharchus.
 As I fynde, he hihte Ynomaus;
 For whos deth was take so gret vengauce, 804
 That al the contre felte therof greuauce.
- "Two consuls were then sent against him, and both were put to flight, to the shame and fear of the Senate." Thei of the mounteyn, alle off oon assent,
 Withoute merci or remysсион,
 Most vengable, haue robbed & Ibrent 808
 Al the contre aboute hem enviroun,
 Til too consuleris cam fro Roome doun:
 The firste off hem callid Lentulus,
 Bothe put to fiht be said[e] Spartarchus. 812
- "Finally, Crassus came down with a legion and slew 36,000 of Spartacus' followers;" Wherof the Romeyns gretli wer dismaied.
 The senatours off indignacioun,
 Bothe ashamed and in hemsilff affraied,
 Sente oon Crassus, a gret lord of the toune, 816
 With the noumbre off a legioun.
 And whan that he on Spartarchus first sette,
 Slouh of his men six* thousand whan thei mette.

792. Spartacus H, Spartachus R 3. 798. dryue] dreven H.
 802. Spartachus H, R 3, Spargachus H 5.
 803. Oenomaus P. 808. vengeably H—brent P, H 5.
 812. be] the J—Spartachus H, R 3.
 818, 22, 34. Spartachus H, R 3. 819. six] vj B.

- And aftirward beside a gret ryueer 820
 Callid Salaire thei hadde a gret bataile,
 Wher Spartarchus stood in gret daungeer;
 For his cheer and contenance gan faille.
 Thretti thousand clad in plate & maille 824
 Wer slayn that day, ther geyned no raunsoun,
 Al ther capteyns assigned to prisoun.
- Withoute al this, as maad is menciouⁿ,
 Sixti thousand in the feeld lay ded, 828
 And six thousand wer sent to prisoun,
 The feeld with blood[e] steyned & maad red.
 And foure thousand, quakyng in ther dreed,
 Wer thilke day, aftir the Romeyn gise, 832
 Take to merci, resceyued to franchise,
- And Spartarchus at mischeeff put to fliht.
 Whan I from hym turnyd my visage,
 He loste his cheer; he loste also his myht 836
 Whan I appalled the fyn of his passage.
 And for he was a cherl off his lynage,
 Off his ences I likid nothyng weel,
 Therfor vnwarli I cast hym fro my wheel. 840
- Off [my] maneres to make a gretter preeff, [p. 308]
 Ther was another famous gret robbour,
 Which thoruh Spaigne was a disclaundrid theeff. 844
 And for he dradde of iustise the rigour,
 Trustyng he sholde fynde in me socour,
 Callid Viriatius,* he Spaigne anon forsook
 And to Roome the riht[e] weie he took.
- Gadred meyne of his condiciouⁿ 848
 Of eueri sect to make hymself strong,
 Theuys, robbours of eueri regioun,
 Many a cherl was medlid hem among.
 His name tencecre, wer it riht or wrong, 852
 What-euer he gat in cite or village,
 With his soudiours he partede the pillage.
- Thus be myn helpe he cam to gret richesse,
 Which brouhte in pride & presumpcioun; 856
 He nat prouided, of my doubilnesse,
 Gan to maligne ageyn[e]s Rome toun;

"6000 were put
in prison and
4000 taken to
mercy.

"Spartacus fled;
and I cast him
from my wheel,
for he was but
a churl.

"There was an-
other robber
called Viriatius,
who lived in
Spain,

and gathering
men set out to
attack Rome;

for through my
aid he had
become rich
and proud.
But he was
slain by Scipio,
son of Lepidus.

845. fynde in me] in me fynde H, P.

846. Viriatius] Vriatus H, R 3, J, Vrinatus B, J, Vyratus H 5.

854. the] his H. 858. ageynes] geyn H.

- But bi the prudence of laste Scipioun,
 Sone of Lepidus, makyng therof no bost, 860
 He slay[e]n was bi them he trustede most.
- "Thus, Bochas, you may see my power and my mutability. Bi which example[s] notable of remembraunce
 Shewed heer-toforn, Iohn Bochas, vnto the,
 Thow maist knowe in parti my puissaunce, 864
 Mi sodeyn chaungis, my mutabilite.
 And for tauoide al ambiguite,
 To declare the somme of myn entent,
 Grete Marrius to the I do presente. 868
- "And now I present to you great Marius, clad in black, with downcast look and tangled grey hair. Blak his weede & his habite also,
 His hed vnkempt, his lokkis hor & gray,
 His look down cast in tokne of sorwe & wo,
 On his cheekis the salt[e] teris lay, 872
 Which bar record off his dedli affray, —
 Wherfor, Bochas, do thi penne dresse
 To descryue his mortal heuynesse.
- "His robe was stained with Roman blood, and all his delight lay in slaughter. His robe steyned was with Romeyn blood, 876
 His suerd ay redi whet to do vengauce,
 Lik a tiraunt most furious & wood,
 In slauhtre & moordre set al his plesaunce.
 Yit nat for thi I gaff hym gouernaunce 880
 Ouer the peepel, ros on my wheel up faste,
 But as vnwarli doun I dede hym caste.
- "Great strife arose between him and Sulla; but I made them both end in mischief. Tween hym & Scilla the woful dedli stryues
 At large heerafftir, Bochas, thou shalt write, — 884
 How many Romeyns lost bi them ther lyues,
 I will also in ordre that thou endite.
 And yiff I shall rebuke hem & atwite,
 As I fro nouht made hem in honour shyne, 888
 So I ageynward made hem in myscheef fyne.
- "I give you in charge to write, when you have leisure, about Mithridates, Forget nat also the dedli pitous fate
 Off hym that was so notable in his lyff, —
 I meene the grete famous Mitridate, 892
 Whos name yit is ful kouth and ryff,
 To whom I gaff a gret prerogatiff,
 Fourti wyntir, the deede was weel seene,
 Ageyn Romeyns the werre to susteene. 896

862. which] whos H — example J.

896. werre] werris H.

- For which heer-aftir I gyue it the in charge
 Of Mitridate the stori set along;
 Whan thou hast leiseer & a space large,
 Remembre his conquest & his deedis strong, 900
 And how that I medlid me among,
 For al his noblesse and felicite,
 To yiue hym part of gret aduersite."
- ¶ Next in ordre, aftir hir owne chois, 904
 Fortune, vntrusti vpon ech partie,
 To Iohn Bochas hath conueied fro Parthois
 Strong Herodes regnyng in Parthie.
 "Loo, Iohn," quod she, "tak heed of this storie, — 908
 Al his kynreede, yiff it be weel out souht,
 Wer be Sithiens chacid & brouht to nouht.
 And yit, for al my mutabilite,
 Somme of hem which stood[e] disespeired 912
 I restored to ther dignite,
 Vnto which whan thei wer repeired,
 This Herodes was hyndred & appeired
 Bi my chaunges for his hatful pride, 916
 Whan he lest wende, vnwarli set aside."
- ¶ Suyng aftir withynne a litil while,
 This gerissh ladi of condicioun
 Gan an illouh falsli for to smyle,
 Lookyng on Bochas, brouhte with hir doun 920
 A myhti prince, which in Rome toun
 Hadde in his daies notable pris & fame,
 Al-be that she expressed nat his name. 924
- Bochas thanne his hed gan doun declyne, [p. 309]
 Seyng that prince, of face disfigured,
 Of suspecioun gan to ymagyne,
 Whan he his mynde fulli hath recurid, 928
 Be certeyn toknis & signes weel assured
 It was Pompeie, surquedous of estat,
 Which with Cesar so longe was at debat.
- Disconsolat thoruh his vnhappi caas, 932
 His face soiled with water of the se,
 Tyme whan Fotynus & cruel Achilles
 Drowned his bodi of furious enmyte.
 His face disfigured at the solempnite 936

whom I helped
 make war
 against Rome
 for forty
 years."

Next in order
 came Orodes
 of Parthia. And
 Fortune said,
 "Lo, Iohn, all
 his kindred
 were defeated
 by the Scy-
 thians, although
 some were re-
 stored to their
 dignity."

Soon afterwards
 Fortune began
 to smile
 falsely, and
 caused a mighty
 Roman prince
 to appear.

And Bochas,
 looking closely
 at his disfigured
 countenance,
 saw that it was
 Pompey, who
 was so long at
 war with
 Cæsar.

Disconsolate, his
 face was soiled
 with smoke and
 by the water of
 the sea;

911. yit] þat H. 916. Bi] to H.
 920. illouh] alouh R 3, yll laughyng P.

With smokes blake, dedli & mortall,
Callid of clerkis the feeste funerall.

for Codrus had
caused his
corpe to be
burnt.
Fortune then
said in scorn:

Codrus caused that the corps was brent
And consumed into ashes dede; 940

To Cesar* aftir his hed was born & sent
Vpon a pole, his stori who list reede.
Aftir al this, Bochas took good heede,
How Fortune bamaner mokerie, 944
In scorn of hym gan thus to speefie:

"I raised his
glory to the
heavens and
enabled him to
give battle to
Cesar,

"Vp to the heuene aftir his deuys
I gan enhaunce & encrece his glorie.
Bi my fauour I gaff hym many a pris, 948
Conquest of kynges with many gret victorie;
And mor to putte his noblesse in memorie,
Bi my support thoruh his cheualrie,
With Cesar Iulius to holde chaumpartie. 952

and while I
shewed him my
fauour his
fame arose until
I withdrew it
again.

And whil that I my fauour did applie
Toward hym his victories to assure,
His fame aros, til that in Thesalie
I gan withdrawe his parti to socoure, 956
Suffryng his enmyes make disconfiture
Vpon this Pompeie, hyndred in my siht,
Whan he to Lesbos at myscheeff took his fliht.

"Finally he was
taken and
slain: I gave
him up, and he
lost his head.
"Yet no man
takes heed of
my changes,
except that you
are busy to set
them in your
book.

Bi the seruauntis of yonge Tholome, 960
Regnyng in Egypt, Pompeie in his dreed
Was take & slayn; he fond no* help in mee:
I gaf hym vp; & so he lost his hed.
Yit of my chaunges no man taketh heed, 964
Nor how vnseurli I cast my dreedful look,
Sauf thou art besi to sette hem in thi book."

Bochas astoned, parcel of hir presence,
Bothe of cheer[e], face and contenance, 968
And in this while hauyng his aduertence,
Thouhte he sauh a maneer resemblaunce
Of a persone, which stood in gret greuaunce;
Til at the laste Fortune caste hir sihte 972
Toward Bochas, & told[e] what he hihte:

947. I] *om.* H.

957. make] *makyng* a H, make a P, R 3, H 5.

962. no] *non* B.

965. vnseurli] *vnseemly* H, *vnsemly* R 3, H 5.

969. his] *this* H. 971. which] *which* þat H, R 3.

“This is,” quod she, “pleynli to termyne,
The famous man, [the] prynce of elloquence
That gaf to Latynes the scole & the doctrine
Of rethorik, as welle of that science.
For which I will thou do thi dilligence
To write with othir of this Tullius
Al hool the caas, & gynne at Marrius.”

976 “This is Tullius,” said she, “the famous man who taught the Romans the arts of rhetoric and oratory.”

¶ These woordes saide, Fortune made an eende;
She beet hir wynges & took hir to the fliht:
I cannat seie what weie she dede weende,
Sauf Bochas tellith, lich an aungel briht
At hir partyng she shewed a gret liht.
But as soone as she gan disapeere,
He took his penne [&] wrot as ye shal heere.

980

984 Telling Bochas to begin with Marius, Fortune flapped her wings and flew away in a great light.

[How Gayus Marrius, of low birthe born/ cam to
high estat whiche blent with couetise after many
grete batailes deied att mischeef.]¹

HEEER Bochas gynneth to tellen of þe man
Callid in his tyme Gayus Marius,
Born at Aprina[s], a castel of Tuscan,
Sone of a carpenteer, the stori tellith thus,
Pursued armys, manli & vertuuous;
Thoruh al Rome nor in that contre
Was ther no man hold so strong as he.

988

Gaius Marius was born at Arpinum in Tuscany. He was the son of a carpenter,

Disciplyne and gret subtilite
He hadde also, as bookis speciefe,
Prudence, manhod and habilite
Bothe in armys and in cheualrie,
Most famous holde toward that partie,
Withynne a while, myn auctour seith certeyn,
Chose a tribun & a gret capteyn.

992

996 strong and well disciplined, prudent and able in arms.

But fro the gynyng of his tendre age,
As histories put in remembraunce,
He was priked so sore in his corage
Bagredi fret of long contynuaunce,
Neuer to staunch[e] with non habundaunce; —

1000

1004 Chosen first a tribune, he later became a great captain, but was always covetous.

975. 2nd the] *om.* J. 977. that] þe H.

987. &] *om.* H, J, R 3.

988. tellen] writen H.

990. Aprina J, Arpynas H 5, Arpinas P.

1003. histories] stories H. 1005. by a gredy H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 126 recto.

- The world nor Fortune, with al ther gret richesse,
Suffised nat tappese his gredynesse. 1008
- A diviner coun-
selled him to
go to Rome,
where he
should not fail
to rise to high
office
- Entryng a temple he fond a dyuynour, [p. 310]
Counsailed [him] ther bi his dyuynaille
Tentre Rome & holde ther soiour,
Bi good ays and knihtli apparaille; 1012
Made hym promys that he shal nat faille
Tatteyne he fauour of the comounte
To gret offis & staat in the cite.
- He became a
consul, although
the Senate
scorned his low
birth.
- Fauour of comouns brouht hym to hih estat, 1016
Bi them reseceyued vnto the dignite
Of consuleer, al-be that the senat
Hadde disdeyn off his felicite,
Because he was born of lough degre. 1020
Grauntid to hym after be the toun
To conquere rewnys a commyssiou.
- Granted a com-
mission to lead
the Roman
legions, he con-
quered Numidia
and captured
Jugurtha, for
which he was
given a triumph.
- He gat the prouynce thoruh his hih renoun
Of Numedie, as he dede hem assaile, 1024
And took the kyng of that regioun
Callid Iugurta proudli in bataile.
For which emprise bi marcial apparaille
He gat the tryumphe, thoruh the toun ridyng, 1028
Because onli for takyng of that kyng.
- The commons
believed that
all their pros-
perity lay in
his hand;
- And for he was a persone so notable
For many famous sodeyn gret victorie,
Namli in conquest preued proffitable, 1032
To al the comoun, as put is in memorie;
And for theneres of his renoun & glorie,
Bi thoppynyoun hool of the cite,
In his hand lay al ther prosperite. 1036
- for he brought
many nations
into subjection
to Rome, and
overcame the
Cimbri and the
Tigurini, who
presumptuously
took upon
themselves to
pass the moun-
tains of Italy.
- Ageyn a people that callid was Tymbrois,
Them to conquere fro Rome he was sent down,
Also ageyn the boistous Tigurnois,
Gadred togidre of many nacioun. 1040
Alle them he brouhte to subieccioun,
Lik as Romeyns hadde afforn desired,
Because thei hadde ageyn ther toun conspired.

1010. him] *om.* J. 1012. good] goodly H. 1016. hih] gret H.1031. gret] *om.* H. 1032. Namli] manly H.

1033. comoun] comons H.

1036. ther] þe H.

- Thei took upon hem of fals presumpcioun 1044
 To passen alle the mounteyns of Itaille,
 First discourfited, as maad is mencionn,
 Thre Romeyn dukis fell in bataille,
 Four scorre thousand clad in plate & maile 1048
 Slayn of Romeyns, the stori is weel knowe,
 Vnder Thalpies at myscheef ouerthrowe.
- This Marrius of marcial auenture
 In Germanye hadde a gret bataille 1052
 With Tewtobochus, a geaunt of stature,
 Put first to fliht with al his apparaille;
 For Marrius dide hym so sore assaille,
 At the chas[e] proudli born to grounde, 1056
 Maugre his miht, tak & in cheynis bounde.
- Marrius aftir with his host hym drouh
 Toward the peepel off Cymbrois for to fihht:
 Too hundred thousand*, I fynde, of hem he slouh, 1060
 Eihthe thousand take, thre thousand put to fliht;
 Kyng Bolerus, a ful famous kniht,
 Slayn in the feelde, for al his gret[e] pride,
 Ageyn Marrius as he dide ride. 1064
- That day of Cymbrois was al the peepel slayn,
 The women aftir he list nat to reserue;
 Yit thei proffered & wolde haue be ful fayn
 Ther chastite deuoutli to obserue, 1068
 In the temple of Vesta for to serue.
 But ther request[e] for he list nat heere,
 With hym thei fauht; echon slayn ifeere.
- Except that summe, whan thei sauh non othir 1072
 Remedi, of purpōs thei wer set,
 Euerich of them to slen & moordren othir;
 And somme thouhte also that it was bet
 To hang hemsilff vpon an hih gibet, 1076
 Than tabide of Marius the outrage,
 Perpetueli to lyuen in seruage.
- Thus Marius of thre naciouns
 Thoruh his conquest complisshed the victorie. 1080
 With prisoneres of sondri regiouns

He also put
 the Teutones to
 flight and took
 their leader
 prisoner.

Afterwards he
 slew 200,000 of
 the Cimbri and
 captured 8000.

They were all
 slain, even the
 women, who
 would gladly
 have served in
 the Temple of
 Vesta.

Some slew one
 another and the
 rest hanged
 themselves.

Thus Marius
 conquered three
 nations.
 He was chosen
 consul six times.

1047. Thre] þe H. 1050. Vnder] ovir H.

1060. thousand] peepel B, J.

1062. Bolerus] Borelus H 5, Beleus P.

1080. complisshed] accomplisshid H, R 3.

- Entred Roome to his eneres of glorie,
 With special laudes notable of memorie:
 First the tryumphe, a guerdoun synguleer, 1084
 He tymes sexe chose a consuleer.
- Fortune was favourable to
 him at first, but
 later on she
 became adverse.
 Thus Fortune was to hym fauourable,
 To sette hym up in worldli dignites
 For a sesoun; but for she was chaungable, 1088
 Among hir gifftes & gret prosperites
 She gaf hym part of gret aduersites:
 And specialli the tyme acountid than,
 Tween hym & Scilla whan the werris gan. 1092
- Lucius Sulla,
 Marius's great
 enemy.
 Lucius Scilla abidyng in Champayne, [p. 311]
 Marrius at Roome tho present,
 Whan the diuysioun gan atween hem tweyne,
 Ech to other contrarie of entent, 1096
 Malencolius and impacient,
 Which of bothe, the stori weel conceyued,
 To gouerne sholde sonnest be receyued.
- marched on
 Rome against
 him,
 Al sodenli, wher it wer riht or wrong, 1100
 Toward Roome takyng his passage,
 Ageyn Marrius to make hymself strong,
 Gan slen & brenne, & of gret outrage,
 Wilful, hasti, furious of corage, 1104
 For sodeyn komyng & vnwar violence
 Ageyn[e]s hym fond[e] no resistence.
- and entering the
 city took the
 Capitol.
 Too myhti batailles he dede with hym leede,
 Entryng the cite, gan thoruh the wal[le] myne; 1108
 With o bataille faste gan hym speede
 To passe the gate callid Aquilyne
 (The tothir gat[e] namyd was Colyne),
 At whos entryng, bi record of the book, 1112
 Scilla be strengthe the Capitoile took.
- Marius, who fled
 with his people
 into a marsh,
 was cap-
 tured and sent
 to prison.
 But whan Marrius hadde knowlechyng
 That Scilla hadde so gret power & myht,
 Withoute arest or lenger abidyng, 1116
 Into a maris Gayus anon riht
 With al his people took sodenli his fliht.
 Fet out be strengthe, koude hym nat diffende,
 Scilla aftir to prisoun dede hym sende. 1120

1089. hir] his H. 1097. Impacient H. 1098. stori] tothir H.
 1099. sonnest shulde H, sonest shold R 3. 1117. Marish P.
 1119. be] with H.

Thus the prowesse for a while slepte
 Of Marrius liggyng in prisoun.
 Scilla that tyme the Capitoille kepte,
 Wherbi al Roome stood in subieccioun.
 And of hatrede in haste he sente down
 A sturdi cherl to Marius in his dreed,
 Whil he lay bounde to smyten of his hed.

Sulla kept Rome
 under his sub-
 jection and sent
 a sturdy knave
 to smite off
 Marius's head
 while he lay
 bound.

1124

This cherl weel compact of braun & of bonys,
 Sent of purpos Marrius for toppresse,*
 For his strengthe ordeyned for the nonys, —
 To the prisoun the cherl gan faste hym dresse,
 Wher Marrius was fetrid in distresse,
 Fulli in purpos, withoute mor delay,
 To heuedyn hym in prisoun ther he lay.

1128

1132

Losed hym first, liggyng on his couche;
 And Marius [a]roos up lik a man,
 The cherl feerful to smyte or to touche.
 And Marius ful proudli tho began
 To entre a place beside of a woman,
 Fond an asse ther of auenture,
 Vpon whos bak the se he gan recure.

1136

1140

After he had
 loosened his
 bonds the churl
 was afraid to
 strike, and
 Marius escaped
 on an ass

Toward Affrik ther he fond passage,
 Bi enprisownyng thouth he wer wex[e] feynt;
 Yit ther abood, stille in his corage,
 Hih worthynesse with prudence meynt,
 Which in his persone wer* nat [fully] queynt,
 Ageyn the malis to make a countirtaille,
 Off proude Scilla the malis eft tassaile.

1144

1148

to the sea and
 thence to Africa,
 where he dwelt
 until he was
 able to give
 battle to Sulla
 again.

Of Itaille rood thoruh the contre,
 Took his viage towarde* Roome toun,
 With foure batailes entreth the cite,
 Sixe hundrid knihtis be computacioun
 Slayn in the feeld, as maad is menciouun.
 Wher men may seen, who list looke a-ferre,
 What damage diuysioun doth in werre.

1152

Returning to
 Rome, he
 entered the
 city, with four
 battalions; and
 600 knights
 were slain,

1123 is misplaced at end of stanza and marked a, 1124 is marked b, H.

1128. 2nd of] om. H.

1129. to oppresse B.

1146. wer] was B, H — fully] om. J, P.

1150. towarde] thoruh B.

- including the great consul Octavius, whose head was set on a pole. First bi the manhod off this Marius, 1156
 In this dyuisioun, the stori who list reede,
 The grete consul callid Octauyus
 Lost his hed[e] & his lyff in dedde; —
 Vpon a pole whil it dede bleede 1160
 Was cruelli presentid of entent
 Tofor the iuges sitting in iugement.
- Merula, priest of the Temple of Jupiter, was also slain, and Crassus and Catulus. Of whos deth[e] summe of hem wer fayn,
 Summe sori, of loue as thei wer bounde. 1164
 And in this werre Merula was slayn,
 Preest in the temple, lik as it is founde,
 Of Iubiter, with many mortal wounde.
 The Romeyn slayn that callid was Crassus; 1168
 With fyr consumyd was proude Catulus.
- Marius held his own against his enemies. Alle his ennyes Marius dede encoumbre,
 Which ageyn hym be conspiracioun
 Wer assentid with a ful gret noumbre 1172
 In ther auys for to haue put hym down,
 Take from hym his domynacioun.
 But he abood the torment & the shours,
 Strong to condempne alle his conspiratours. 1176
- and was chosen consul six times. Finally, Fortune turned away from him. Sixe tymes, afforn rehersed heer, [p. 312]
 Of condicioun thouh he wer despitous,
 He was chose so ofte consuleer;
 Til Fortune gan wexen envious 1180
 Ageyn this saide cruel Marius,
 Which made the senat with al the cheualrie
 To grucheche ageyn his hatful tirannye.
- At this time Damasippus sent four Romans, In this tyme, the stori maketh mynde, 1184
 Damasippus, a pretour of the toun,
 Freendli to Marius & helpyng, as I fynde,
 Vnder a shadwe of decepcioun
 Vnto ther cite for to do tresoun, 1188
 Causyng foure Romeyns come I-feere
 Toffor Marrius a certeyn day tappeere.
- Scævola, Cotta, Domitius and Antistius to Marius, whom he slew unlawfully. And ther namys to putte in memorie,
 Sceuola, Carbo and Domycius, 1192
 The fourthe off them, as seith the stori,
 Callid in Roome the wise Antistius.

1173. ther] þat H.

1179. often H. 1186. helpyng] helpely H, helply R 3.

1188. do] om. H. 1192. Sevola H — Carbo] Cotta P.

- Togidre assemblid tofor Marrius,
 He of rancour, geyn iugement or lawe, 1196
 Made hem be slayn & thoruh the cite drawe.
- Ther bodies aftir wern in Tibre cast
 Bi cruelte of saide Marius. Their bodies
 were thrown
 into the Tiber.
 Duke Cam-
 panus aided
 Sulla, 1200
- Alle this while the cruel werre last
 Tween hym & Scilla, til duk Campanus
 Cam on the parti, hard[y] & despitous,
 To helpe Scilla ther baneres first displaid,
 Wherof al Roome was sodenli affraied. 1204
- At the gate that callid was Colyne
 Marrie & Scille hadde a gret bataille, —
 Foure score thousand, the noubre to termyne
 On Marrius side slayn, it is no faille; 1208
 Scilla victorious, with marcial apparaille
 Entryng the toun, ageyn his oth, parde,
 Thre thousand citeseyns slouh of the cite.
- Of folk disarmyd & naked in the toun, 1212
 Thei nouthur spared old nor yong of age,
 The cruel moordrers walkyng up nor down
 Be Scilla sent in that mortal rage,
 Till Catullus, a prince fall in age, 1216
 Saide vnto Scilla, “we can no difference
 Atween rebelloun nor atween innocence;
- We moordre & slen withoute excepcioun
 Both hih & louh, holdyng no maneere; 1220
 Ageyn al kniithod, to myn oppynyoun,
 We do proceede in our conquest heere, —
 Our title is lost the tryumphe to requere
 Of hih prowess, whan we canat obserue 1224
 No difference to slen nor [to] reserue.”
 remonstrated
 with him, say-
 ing that if
 they continued
 thus to slaugh-
 ter they would
 have no title of
 triumph.
- And in this while, of hatful cruelte
 Scilla contreued lettres diffamable,
 Wherbi fyue hundred out of that cite
 Wer falsli bashed, citeseyns notable, — 1228
 Ageyn[es] hem he was so vntretable, —
 Alle ther goodes achetid in that rage
 Of auarice and of fals pillage. 1232
 Sulla also ban-
 ished 500 not-
 ables and con-
 fiscated their
 goods out of
 avarice.

1195. afforn H. 1202. on] vnto J, to P, on in H 5.

1204. was] wer H.

1216. Catallus H.

- A brother of Marius hid in a goat-house but was dragged to Catullus's grave,
- Another Romeyn namyd Marrius,
 Brother to Marrius, of whom tofor I tolde,
 For dreed of Scilla fledde & took an hous
 Which vnto goot was set up for a foolde; 1236
 Found & rent out in his daies olde,
 With cordes drawe (no rescus myhte hym saue)
 Of cruel vengauce to Catullus graue,
- where Sulla commanded his eyes to be torn out, his hands smitten off, and his head to be set on a pole and sent to Marius.
- Wher Scilla made bi cruel* iugement, 1240
 With a sharp suerd[e], forgid for to bite,
 Aftir tyme his eien wer out rent,
 Bothe attonys his handis of to smyte.
 His hed smet of, no raunsoun myhte hym quite,^r1244
 Set on a pole, it wolde be non othir,
 And off despiht[e] sent vnto his brothir,
- Marius himself was in great danger;
- To grete Marius, of whom I spak now riht, —
 The grete duk, so mihti & so huge, 1248
 Which hadde afforn[e] tak hym to the fliht
 For feer of Scilla in that mortal deluge,
 Into a cite to fynde ther refuge,
 Callid Preueste, ther stondyng in gret dreed, 1252
 Namli whan he beheeld his brothris hed.
- and when he saw his brother's head he despaired, and drawing a sword bade his servant kill him.
- For-asmoche as he no socour fond,
 Disespierd, this was his purpos:
 To slen hymself[e] with his owne hond 1256
 In thilke place wher he was kept[e] cloos.
 Drouh out a suerd, up anon he roos,
 Constreynd his seruaunt in that sodeyn affray
 Smyte off his hed, the silue same day. 1260
- Men may see that death is the end of all trouble and adversity. Fortune once more shewed in the case of Marius how she can vary her course.
- ¶ Men seen how deth is fyn of al myscheeff, [p. 313]
 Eende off aduersite that doth wrechchis tarie.
 Fortune heer maketh another preeff
 In Marrius, how she hir cours can varie, 1264
 Bi an euidence hatful and contrarie
 To shewe hir malis and vngoodliheed
 Ageyn this duk, alas, whan he was ded.
 This frowarde* ladi, of malis most vengable, 1268
 Whan hir list furiousli to raue
 And shewe hirsilff[e] cruel & vnstable,

1239. Catallus H. 1240. cruel] gret B.

1268. frowarde] frowardli B.

1269. H repeats here the 2nd line of preceding stanza, but alters last word to rave.

- To non estat she list no reward haue.
 Causede Marius be take out of his graue 1272
 Bi cruel Scilla, in stori it is founde,
 His ougli careyn smet on pecis rounde.
 And aftir, mor to shewe his cruelte, —
 Marrius sholde haue no burying place, — 1276
 Caste his careyn, of kankrid enmyte,
 Into Tibre, ther was non othir grace.
 Loo, thus can Fortune for hir folk purchase!
 Bi which exauple touchyng Marrius, 1280
 Off worldli chaunges Bochas writeth thus,
 Maketh in this chapitle a descripsioun,
 First what thyng is verry gentilesse,
 To sette a preeff & a probacioun, 1284
 No thyng atteyneth vnto hih noblesse
 But the cleer shynyng of vertuous clenness,
 Which may nat shewe, in lough nor hih* parage,
 But wher it groweth out of a peur corage. 1288
 Worldli poweer, oppressioun, tyrannye,
 Erthli tresour, gold, stonis nor richesse
 Be no menys vnto gent[e]rie,
 But-yif vertu reule ther hih prowesse: 1292
 For wher vices haue any interesse
 In hih[e] berthe, mene, or lough kynreede,
 Deeme no man gentil, but onli bi his deede.
 In roial paleisis of ston & metal wrouht, 1296
 With galleries or statli cloistres rounde,
 Gentilesse or noblesse is nat souht,
 Nor in cileris nor in voutis rounde;
 But onli ther wher vertu doth habounde: 1300
 Corious clothes nor gret pocessiouns
 Maketh nat men gentil but condic[i]ouns.
 Philisophres conclude* in ther entent
 And alle thes worthi famous old auctours, 1304
 No man may quethe in his testament
 Gentilesse vnto his successours;
 Of wikked weed[e] come non holsum flours.
 Concludyng thus: of good[e] men & shrewes, 1308
 Calle ech man gentil aftir his good[e] thewes.

1274. on] in H. 1282. chapter H 5, Chapter P.
 1283. gentilnesse H. 1287. hih nor lough B, P.
 1292. hih] his H. 1293. haue] hath H. 1299. Sileers H.
 1303. concluden B. 1305. questh H.

After his
 burial, Sulla
 had his body
 dug up again,
 and his ugly
 corpse cut into
 round pieces
 and cast into
 the Tiber.
 Thus Fortune
 rewards her
 folk!

Bochas says
 that nothing
 attains to high
 noblesse except
 the clear
 shining of
 virtue, that can
 spring only
 from a pure
 heart.

Worldly power,
 tyranny, and
 wealth are no
 means to
 gentility unless
 they are ruled
 by virtue.

No man is
 gentle except
 by his deeds;

and gentility
 cannot be de-
 vised by
 testament to
 our successors.
 Wholesome
 flowers do not
 grow on weeds.

- Duke Marrius,
Born of poor
parents, was a
man of court-
acious nobility,
but his heart
was cankered
by the worm
of avarice.
- Duk Marrius, of whom I spak toforn,
Of nature, the stori berth witnessse,
As* be discent [both] poore and nedi born, 1312
Bi disposicioun of coraious noblesse,
Hadde in his persooone wit, strengthe [&] hardynesse;
Vndir al this, ther dide his herte myne
A werm of auarice his worshep to declyne. 1316
- What avails
plenty that can
never suffice?
The river of
Tantalus cannot
assuage the
thirst of greed.
- What uaiileth plente, that neuer may suffice?
Or what the flood, that staunche may no thrust?
Or what an appetit, that euer doth arise,
Alwey to ete, and euer to ete hath lust? 1320
Of kan[kri]d hunger so fretyng is the rust,
That the ryueer of Tantalus in his rage
Of gredi etikes the fret may nat asswage.
- You have heard
the end of
Marius.
Three Cleo-
patras next
appeared before
Bochas, with
woeful downcast
looks.
- ¶ Of Marrius ye han herd the cende, 1324
His woful fall & his vnhappi caas.
Into fate how he dede weende.
Now wil I folwe myn auctour Iohn Bochas,
How onto hym thre Cleopatras, 1328
With look[e] down cast, woful face & cheere,
Alle attonys to hym dide appeere.
- The first of
them had had
three husbands,
of whom the
last was An-
tiochus;
- The firste of hem, bi processe of writyng,
Hadde thre husbondis, Bochas doth expresse: 1332
Weddid in youthe to Alisauudre the kyng
Callid Zebenna, a prince* of gret noblesse;
Aftir that for hir gret fairnesse
She weddid was vnto Demetrius, 1336
And laste of all to kyng Anthiochus.
- and as Bochas
has already
written their
unfortunate
fate and her
son's great un-
kindness, it
were idle to
rehearse it all
again.
- Of hir thre husbondis woful auenture
And of hir sonis gret vnkyndenesse,
Bochas afforn hath doon his besi cure 1340
Ceriousli the maner to expresse,
Which to reherse ageyn wer idilnesse,
Sith al the processe heer-toforn is founde
Of the firste & eek of the secounde, 1344
- The second
Cleopatra was
weddel to
Ptolemy Euer-
getes, who
served her son
up to her at
table.
- Which weddid was to kyng Tholome, [p. 314]
Lik as toforn is maad eek menciou
Bothe of ther ioie & ther aduersite.
The firste slayn be drynkyng of poisoun, 1348

1312. As] Al B, & H, And R 3 — both] om. J, H 5.

1317. availith H. 1319. which nevir doth rise H.

1334. prince] princesse B.

And the secounde, to hir confusioun,
Bi Euergetes, wher she wer wo or fayn,
Was with hir child[e] seruid, that was slayn.

The thridde weddid was to kyng Gryspus, 1352 The third
married King
Grypus; and
she was slain
in a temple.
Slayn in a temple bi ful gret outrage,
For dreed & shame gan wexe furious,
To saue hirsilff[e] knew non auantage,
Saeue she enbracid of Iubiter an image, 1356
In the stori as heer-tofforn is founde,
Or she was ded suffred many a wounde.

[How kyng Mitridate bood vij. yere in wildernesse
had grete tormentys bothe in see & londe, by
his blood brouht to vttraunce slouh himsilf with
a swerde.]¹

IWIL passe ouer thes Cleopatras thre,
Foorth procede to the hasti fate 1360 Duke Mithri-
dates was
in his young
days nearly
destroyed by
his tutors,
who, seeking his
death,
Soone execut bi Parchas cruelte
Vpon the duk callid Mitridate.
First reherse the grete vnkyndli hate
Of them that wern his tutours, as I reede, 1364
Hym to destroie bassent of his kynreede.
Which of purpos dide his deth prouide
Bi many vnkouth straunge occasioun:
In tendre youth[e] first thei made hym ride 1368 made him
ride a wild
horse.
Vpon an hors wildere than [a] leoun,
Off purpos onli for his destruccioun.
But al-be-so that he was yong of age,
The hors he reuled in al his moste rage. 1372
Nat of doctryne, but onli of nature
He was disposid kon[n]yngli to ride,
Ouer hym the maistri to recure, 1376 But he was so
skilled a horse-
man that he
escaped all
danger.
Maugre the hors, of wit he was his guide.
What weye he took[e], froward or a-side,
He dauntede hym, that wher-so-euer he rood
Bridled hym & on his bak abood.
His owne kyn & his next allies 1380 His own kin
tried to poison
him,
Most laboured to bryngre hym to myscheeff,
With venymous drynk set on hym espies

1362. duke] king P.

1369. a] om. H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 128 recto.

- At good leiseer, as dooth a couert theeff,
Of ther fell poisoun for to make a preeff, 1384
In ther entent, the stori is weel kouth,
Hym to moordre in his tendre youth.
- and for self-
protection he
provided him-
self with all
manner of
notable anti-
dotes. But whan that he apparceyued ther tresoun,
To saue hymself[e] made gret ordenaunce; 1388
Anon as he gan haue suspecioun
Of the[r] vnkyndli hatful purueyaunce,
For remedies made chemisaunce:
Was prouided ther malis to declyne, 1392
Be many notable preeued medecyne.
- To avoid his
enemies he
withdrew from
his country and
hunted wild
beasts And ther malis prudentli teschewe,
Is remembred, whil he was yong of age,
With certeyn freendes, which that dede hym sue, 1396
He disposed of custum his corage
To hunte & chase beestis most sauage;
Vndir that colour he dede it for a wile,
Ferr from his contre absente hym for a while. 1400
- and lodged in
caves and hol-
low trees among
high hills in
the wilderness
for seven years. Of o corage, of oon hert & o cheer
Suffred manli, took non heuynesse,
In desertis space of seuene yeer,
Among hih hilles abood in wildirnesse. 1404
Set in Asia, the stori berth witnesse,
Fond no loggyng, tracyng the contres,
Saué in kauernys & in holwe trees.
- He lived on
the beasts
he slew, slept
little and
avoided
idleness. The book remembreth how that his diete 1408
Wer beestis wilde enchacid with gret miht,
Fledde idilnesse, eschewed al quiete,
And litil sleep suffised hym at niht;
Bexercice his bodi was maad liht: 1412
Ther was nouthur, whan hym list pursue,
Hert nor hynde that miht his hand eschewe.
- and was so
swift and strong
that no animal
could escape
him. He nouthur dradde tiges nor leouns;
He was so swiff, thouth thei dede hym assaile, — 1416
Lik of strengthe to olde champions,
No wilde beeste of gret nor smal entaille
Tescape his hand[e] myht nat countiruaile
Yif he wer war[e], erli outhur late, 1420
So gret[e] swiffnesse hadde Mitridate.

- Among he hadde in armys excersise,
 Among to tourneye & renne on hors[e]bak;
 Al delicat fare he dede also despise,
 1424 Of gredi excesse; in hym ther was no lak:
 A-nihter-tyme his slep ful ofte he brak,
 Stoundemeel the hour[e]s for to marke;
 In the dawenyng roos up or the larke. 1428
- The space accomplisshid fulli of seuene yeer, [p. 3] 1435
 He is repeired hom to his contre;
 Shewed hymself of manhod and of cheer
 Ful lik a kniht, his stori who list see. 1432
 Wherof his enmyes sore astoned bee;
 Kauhte of his comyng in herte a maner dreed,
 Supposyng afforn that he was ded.
- In whos absence his wiff Leodices
 1436 Conceyued a childe, as maad is mencion.
 For the diffame sholde nat kome in pres,
 Hym for to moordre she souhte occasioun,
 Fulli in purpos to slen hym be poisoun.
 1440 Of which diffautis hir lord was nothyng fayn,
 Knowyng the trouthe, made hir to be slayn.
- Took on hym aftir many knihtli deede:
 First to conquere al Pafflagonye
 1444 Bi the helpe of worthi Nychomeede,
 That tyme callid kyng of Bithynye,
 Togidre assurid to been of allie
 In losse or lucre, Fortune to be ther guide, 1448
 And therto swor[e]n neuer to deuyde.
- To Mitridate legat^{es} wer down sent
 From the Romeyns, hym lowli requeryng,
 That he wolde, lik to ther entent,
 1452 Pafflagonie restore vnto ther kyng,
 Which he hadde wonne, the cite assailyng.
 But he list nat aduertise ther praieere,
 Nor on no parti ther requestis heere. 1456
- He dradde nat ther thretis nor manacis,
 Gat proudli after the lond of Galathie,
 In his conquest^{es} wan* many othir placis,
 Capadoce took to his partie, 1460

He was a good
 jouter and
 rider and
 despised luxury.

At the end of
 the seven years
 he went home
 and was feared
 by all his
 enemies.

During his ab-
 sence his wife
 had a child,
 and to hide
 her shame
 sought to
 poison him, for
 which he caused
 her to be slain.

He conquered
 Paphlagonia
 with the help
 of Nicomedes,

and afterwards
 was required by
 the Romans to
 restore the
 kingdom. This
 he refused
 to do.

He had no
 fear of them,
 and soon con-
 quered Galatia
 and Cappadocia.

1426. full offt his sleep H.

1435. that] trowid þat H.

1459. wan] gat B.

Slouh ther kyng, of hatrede & envie,
 Ariaractes, a ful manli man;
 And in this wise his conquest he began.

He then fell
 out with Nico-
 medes, who
 took the crown
 of Cappadocia
 without Mithri-
 dates' consent.

Ageyn thassuraunce tween hym & Nichomeede, 1464
 Alle sodenli he gan falle at debat;
 Thouhte he wolde werreie hym in deede,
 Because that he, pompous & elat,
 In Capadoce took on hym the estat 1468
 To regne as kyng, ageyn[e]s his entent,
 He nouthur beyng of counsail nor assent.

although he
 had married his
 sister.

Yit Nichomeede, or thei gan debate,
 Hadde long afforn[e] to his owne ences 1472
 The sustir weddid of this Mitridate,
 Whan thei as brethre lived in rest and pes.*
 And she was also callid Leodices,
 Hauyng too sonys born for to succede 1476
 Afftir disses of seid[e] Nichomeede.

After Nico-
 medes' death he
 deprived his
 two sons of the
 kingdom

But bi processe thes said[e] childre tweyne
 In Capadoce, bi help of Mitridate,
 Cleymed a title, iustli for tatteyne 1480
 Vnto the crowne, ther fadir ded but late.
 For which thei gan felli to debate,
 Til Mitridate falsli gan contryue
 His too neuews vngoodli to de pryue. 1484

and had his
 own son
 crowned there.
 The Romans
 sent down
 Ariobarzanes
 to chase him
 out, but Mith-
 ridates allied
 himself with
 Tigranes and
 was victorious,

Al Capadoce he took into his hand,
 His owne sone he hath ther crowned kyng.
 Capadociens, bassent of al the lond,
 Gan disobeie of purpos his werkynge. 1488
 Whan the Romeyns considered al this thing,
 Ariobarzanes in haste thei sente doun
 Geyn Mitridate to keep that regioun.

The sone of whom fro them thei ha[n] refusid, 1492
 Out of ther kyngdam gan hym to enchase;
 For thei sempte ther franchise was abusid,
 To seen a foreyn occupie that place.
 Mitridate gan newli hem manace, 1496
 And took with hym to susteene his partie
 Tigranes the kyng of Armenye.

1462. Arriarattes H, Ariarectes J, Ariarathes P.
 1474. lived in rest and pes] list to leue in pes B.
 1493. hym to] them H.

Ariobarzanes, that was fro Roome sent
 To Capadoce to helpe hem & counsaile, 1500
 Of Mitridate knowyng the entent,
 How he cam down proudli hym tassaille
 With Tigranes set in the ferst bataille,
 Of Capadoce that al the regioun 1504
 Was brouht that day to ther subieccioun.
 Thus Mitridate hauyng his entent,
 In short tyme contrees conqueryng,
 Was myhtiest prince of al the orient, 1508
 And in tho daies oon the grettest kyng.
 And as it is remembred be writyng,
 He delitid most in astronomye,
 In sortilege & in sorcerye. 1512
 And with al these, he dede his besi cure
 For to lerne vnkouth conclusiouns [p. 316]
 And secretes souht out bi nature,
 Knew the langage of dyuers regiouns, 1516
 Of too and twenty sondri naciouns,
 And heeld[e] women many mo than oon,
 Loued Hipsicrata aboue hem euerichon.
 To the Romeyns this manli Mitridate, 1520
 As bookis olde recorde of hym & seyn,
 Vpon a day, of verray cruel hate
 Thoruh al Asie he bad that ech Romeyn
 Sholde of his men merciles be slayn: 1524
 Twenti thousand he slouh eek on o day
 Of Romeyn marchauntes, ther durst no man sei nay.
 To hym he drouh dyuers naciouns
 To encrece* his parti bi puissaunce, 1528
 Kymbrois, Gallois, with othir regiouns,
 Bastornois took to his alliaunce;
 With straunge people made his aqueyntaunce
 Wher that euer he rood nyh or ferre, 1532
 With them of Roome for to holde werre.*
 In Grece also he gat many an ile,
 Al Ciclades to his subieccioun;
 Conquered so, that withynne a while 1536
 Of Athenes he gat the famous toun.
 But whan Romeyns knew his entencioun,
 Thei sente Scilla in a furious heete
 With Mitridate in Grece for to meete. 1540

and soon
became the
most powerful
prince in the
East.
He delighted
in astronomy
and divination
and sorcery,

and in abstruse
problems, and
knew 22 differ-
ent languages.
He had many
wives, but loved
Hypsicratia
best.

He hated the
Romans and
slew 20,000 of
their merchants
in one day,

and allied him-
self with various
strange peoples
against Rome.

In Greece he
conquered the
Cyclades and
Athens.
Sulla was sent
against him,

and, defeating
his general
Archelaus,

Archelaus, which that was constable,
Leedyng the host of kyng Mitridate,
Gan ageyn Scilla, trustyng he was able,
Maugre Romeynes* with hym to debate. 1544
As thei mette in ther furious hate,
Beside Ortonia of Grece a gret[e] toun,
Of Archelaus the parti was born down.

conquered Ephe-
sus, Cappadocia
and Bithynia.

Ther gan Scilla to been victorious 1548
Geyn Mitridate, & be gret violence
Gat al Ephese, a kyngdam ful famous,
Rood thoruh Asie, fond no resistance;
Bi his kniithod & manli prouidence 1552
Capadoce, Bithynye eek also
To Romeyn handis he gat hem bothe too.

At this, Mithri-
dates hastened
to make peace,
hoping to suc-
ceed better
later.

Whan Mitridate parceyued hath this thyng,
How the conquest of Scilla took encrees, 1556
Anon he caste withoute long tarieng,
For a tyme with hym to haue a pes.
Of hih[e] wisdam he was nat rek[e]les
To dissymule til* he fond tyme & space 1560
In Fortune to fynde better grace.

On Sulla's re-
turn to Rome,

Abood his tyme, kept hym silue cloos
Til he fond leiseer lik his oppynyoun.
In this while of aenture aroos 1564
Withynne Roome a gret discencioun
Tween too consuleris beyng in that toun,
Which tappese bi his auctorite
Scilla cam up ageyn to the cite. 1568

Mithridates
collected an
army and laid
siege to
Cyzicus, the
greatest city of
Asia,

Whan Mitridate his absence dede espie,
To his purpos fond oportunyte,
Gadred peple, & with his cheualrie
A siege leid to Cizite the cite, 1572
Of al Asie most off auctorite.
Til Lucullus, a myhti consuleer,
To breke the seege aproche gan ful neer.

but was at-
tacked by
Lucullus, who

Mitridate hadde on fyue capteyns 1576
Tofor the toun made a disconfiture,
Of hih despiht he hadde to Romeyns.
But Lucullus the damage to recure,

1544. Romeynes] with Romeyns B. 1552. &] of H.
1555. hath] om. H. 1557. long] om. H.
1560. til] whan B. 1566. that] þe H, R 3.

- Tenclose ther enmyes dide his* besi cure: 1580
 To his mynours gaf anon in charge
 Aboute the siege to make a dich ful large.
- Thei withynne hadde knowlechyng
 Be certeyn toknys of al þer gouernaunce; 1584
 Wherupon thei made no taryeng
 To caste a weie for ther deliuerance.
 Mitridates seying ther ordenaunce,
 Of hih prudencæ scaped away beside, 1588
 And at the seege no lenger list abide.
- Lucullus than, the myhti consuleer,
 Pursued aftir, slouh of his meyne
 Swich multitude, that Asapus the ryueer 1592
 Was maad with blood[e] lik the Rede Se.
 With wynd & tempest fordryue also was he,
 And whan he sauh no socour on the lond,
 To shipp he wente with strong & myhti hond. 1596
- He fond Fortune cruel aduersarie [p. 317] Fortune was
 On lond & se, this worthi Mitridate; contrary to
 And Neptunus made the se contrarie, Mithridates
 Ageyn[e]s hym his puissaunce to abate. and threw him
 1600 down from his
 What shal men calle it? — influence or fate? — high estate.
 So sodenli a prince of hih renoun
 From hih noblesse to be plongid down.
- For any myscheeff he kept ay o visage, 1604 Nevertheless he
 This Mitridate, & loth was for to plie did not lose
 Or for to bowe, so strong was his corage, courage, and
 But efft ageyn goth with his cheualrie once more gave
 Toward Adrastus, an hill of Armenye, battle to his
 1608 enemies in
 Where-as Pompeie besette hym enviroun, Armenia.
 Sent fro Roome to his destruccioun.
- Mitridate making his loggyng place
 Vndir that hill, whan it drouh to niht, 1612 The sky was
 The troubli heuene with thundryng gan manace; troubled
 The firy leuene dirkid hath his siht; with thunder
 The cloudi moone clipped of hir liht, and fiery
 Astoned hym bi vnwar violence, lightning, and
 1616 the moon
 That he stood confus of al prouidence. eclipsed.

1580. his] ther B. 1582. the] his H. 1587. Mitridate H.

1592. Asopus H, J, P, R 3.

1608. Armony H.

- He grew almost weary of life; but his faithful wife never once left him and followed him wherever he went, disguised as a page.
- He was be tempest & vnwar dirknesse
Almost maad wery of his woful liff;
Yit I fynde, of verray kyndenesse, 1620
Hipsicrata, which that was his wiff,
Nouther for werre nor no mortal stryff
Left hym neuere: disgised of visage
Folwed hym arraied as a page. 1624
- Yet even when Fortune was most menacing, his courage did not fail him.
- Yit in his moste mortal heuynesse,
Whan cloudi Fortune gan hym most manace,
Of his corage the naturel quiknesse 1628
Appalled nat nor remeued from his place,
So hih prowesse dide his hert embrace.
Nat dispeired for no sodeyn fall,
Of condiciouns he was so marciall.
- He shewed no sign of weakness, although there was the greatest occasion for despair.
- In tokne wherof, he stondyng at myscheeff,
Chaunged nouther cheer nor contenance: 1632
An euidence & a ful gret preeff
Of manli force and hertli assurance.
Deffying Fortune, with al hir variaunce, 1636
Whan that he fond to his destruccioun
Of dispeir grettest occasioun.
- With him was a bailiff named Castor, who traitorously sent his master's children as hostages to Rome,
- With hym he hadde a bailiff, as I fynde,
Callid Castor, which of condicioun 1640
Was to his lord[e] fals & eek vnkynde,
And conspired ageyn hym fals tresoun.
In tokne wherof, up to Roome toune 1644
His lordis childre, yong & tendre of age,
Lik a fals theeff he sent hem in hostage.
- and murdered one of his sons. Another son, Pharnaces, was ungrateful
- Oon of his sones he moordred be tresoun,
Which Mitridate took ful sore at herte. 1648
Another sone, as maad is menciou, n,
Fals to his fader, which whan he dide aduerte,
The vnkyndnesse made hym sore smerte;
For of al vicis, shortli to conlude,
Werst of alle is ingratitude. 1652
- and disloyal, and, taking possession of the army,
- This same child, of whom I make mynde,
Callid Pharnax, which ageyn nature 1656
To his fadir tretour & vnkynde, —
And his purpos ageyn hym to recure
In al hast[e] dede his besi cure;
For tacomplisshe his purpos in partie,
Took to hym hool his fadris cheualrie.

- Be sleihte & meede whan he was maad[e] strong, 1660 laid siege to his father (which, it seems to me, was wrong).
- He beseged his fadir round aboute, —
 Vnto nature, me seemeth, he dide wrong
 To putte his fadir in so gret a doute.
 Kyndenesse was ferr shet withoute, 1664
 Whan the sone, with hate set affire,
 Ageyns his fadir list falsli to conspire.
 With multitude his fadir was constreyned,
 Mauge his myht, into a tour to flee, 1668 and compelled him to seek refuge in a tower.
 His sone vnkynde hath at hym disdeyned;
 And yit for al his straunge aduersite,
 Of his corage the magnanymyte
 In his persone stood hool, list nat varie, 1672
 Thouh Fortune was to hym contrarie.
 Yit myn auctour Bochas berth record,
 That Mitridate, yif it wolde haue bee,
 Requered his sone to been at accord 1676 Although he bade his son make peace with him, the son was obdurate;
 And set aside al old contrariouste.
 But he vnkynde, was indurat parde,
 Euere froward, malicious of corage,
 So disposed from his tendre age. 1680
- So that the kyng Mitridate, alas, [p. 318] and Mithridates, who never before had lost heart, was overcome by unkindness.
 Was ouercome be vnkyndenesse, 1684
 That neuer afforn[e] in no maner caas
 Stood disamaied, but of hih prowessse
 Kept ay o face al passiouns to represe.
 This vertu force, bi marcial doctryne,
 For non aduersite suffrid* hym declyne.
 Eende of his werris & his mortal stryues, 1688 He slew his wives and daughters and concubines by giving them poison,
 Of his debatis and discenciouns,
 His concubynes, his douhtres & his wyues,
 Be mene onli of certeyn pociouns,
 Slouh hem alle be drynkyng of poisouns; 1692
 For he nat wolde, the cause to descryue,
 Aftir his deth thei sholde abide alyue.
 His owne deth, of mortal fel rigour
 Compassed afforn[e], thus he gan devise:
 Made a Frensh kniht that was a souldiour, 1696 and made a Gallic knight run him through with a sharp sword.
 With a sharp suerd in ful cruel wise
 To renne hym thoruh; wherbi the fraunchise
 Conserued was his purpos to fulfill, 1700
 He shold nat deie but bi his owne will.

1687. suffrid] listnat B. 1694. on live H. 1697. Franch H.

This was the end of Mithridates. Let all princes take heed of his death.

Loo, heer the cende of kyng Mitridate!
 Lat princis alle of his deth take heede,
 How reklesli he passed into fate 1704
 And bi assent made his herte bleede.
 And Bochas heer, who list his book to reede,
 Pleykli rehersyng but in woordes fewe,
 To worldli princis doth his conceit shewe. 1708

Lenvoye.

Mighty Princes, compare in your minds the concord and gladness of heaven and the worldly changes of Fortune.

MYHTI Princis, lefft up your corages,
 Toward heuene doth your hertes dresse,
 Of your memorie * tourne up þe visages,
 Wher ioie is euere, concord and gladnesse, 1712
 Trewe armony, celestial suetnesse, —
 Countirpeiseth in your remembraunce
 Worldli chaungis, Fortunys variaunce.

Think of the outrage of war, slaughter, murder, division, deceit, brought about through a sudden change of worldly variance.

Aduertiseth the mortal fel outrages 1716
 Of blodi werris impossible to repress,
 Whil fals envie with his furious rages
 In sondry rewmys hath so gret interesse, —
 Slauhtre, moordre, deuisioun, falsnesse, 1720
 Which conscience haue brouht[e] to vttraunce
 Thoruh sodeyn chaung of worldli variaunce.

Reckon up the princes, who sat on high thrones, and their end, and the bloody wages of tyrants.

Rekne up princis that sat on hih[e] stages:
 What was the fyn of ther roial noblesse? 1724
 Or of tirauntis rekne up the bloodi wages:
 Sodeyn slauhtre guerdouned ther woodnesse.
 Mitridate can bern herof witsnesse,
 Bi blood vnkynde brouht vnto vttraunce, 1728
 Thoruh sodeyn chaung of worldli variaunce.

Remember the Golden Age, when Saturn ruled, and the silver world of Jupiter, and the fierce world made steel by Mars.

Princis remembreth vpon the goldene ages,
 Whan Satourn reuled the world in rihtwisnesse;
 Next Iubiter, for peeplis auantages, 1732
 In silueren world conserued in clenness,
 Which Mars hath now tournid to felnesse,
 Made it stelene, with suerd, dagger & launce,
 Thoruh sodeyn chaung of worldli variaunce. 1736

1711. memorie] memoire B, J.

1716. the] their H — outrages] Coragis H.

Of Mitridate registreth the viages,
 Conspired poisons taffraie his hih prowesse,
 On lond and se tempestuous passages,
 Bi constreynt bood seuene yeer in wildirnesse.
 Of his wandryng peiseth thunsekirnesse,
 His eende in myscheef, knew non auoidaunce
 Geyn worldli chaung nor Fortunys variaunce.

1740 Remember the warlike enterprises and insecure life of Mithridates, who could not avoid the variance of Fortune.

Yif necligence haue brouht you in rerages
 Towardis God, or he rekne in streihtnesse,
 Lat resoun medle for you to leyn hostages, —
 Compassioun, merci, partyng of almesse,
 Toward heuene to supporte your feeblesse,
 Whan your meritis shal peisen in ballaunce
 Of worldli chaungis & Fortunys variaunce.

1744 If you have been negligent towards God, let reason help you to lay compassion, charity and mercy as hostages in heaven.

Deth spareth* nouthur hih blood nor hih lynages,
 Hath mynde heeron for any reklesnesse;
 Transitoire been heer your pilgrymages,
 Set with brigauntis vnwarli you toppresse,
 But-yif prudence bi gret auyssenesse
 With prouidence preserue your puissaunce
 Geyn worldli chaung & Fortunys variaunce.

1752 Death spares no man, but prudence may preserve you against worldly change.

1756

[How Eucratides kyng of Sithie was slayn bi Demetrius, and after his careyn cast to houndys.]¹

NEXT in ordre to Bochas dide appeere
 A woful prince, which put himsilf in pres,
 Regnyng in Sithia, his stori doþ us lere,
 The name of whom was Eucratides.
 But to disturbe his quiete & his pes,
 Ageyn[e]s hym, pleyntli, as I fynde,
 Cam Demetrius the myhti* kyng of Ynde.

1760 A woful prince, Eucratides of Scythia, next appeared before Bochas.

1764

Of whom the poweer & the violence
 To Eucratides was verray importable:
 Beseegid first, and for lak of diffence
 Take at myscheef, his foon nat merciabile;
 For Demetrius was on hym so vengable,
 Whan he was slayn withynne his owne boundis,
 Made the careyn [to] be caste out to* houndis.

[p. 319] He was besieged by Demetrius, king of India, and finally captured and slain,

1768

1738. hih] *om.* H. 1751. spareth] spared B — lynage J.
 1760. Sithia] Bactris P. 1764. myhti] worthy B.
 1771. to] *om.* J, H 5 — out to] vnto B, out to the J.

¹ MS. J. leaf 131 recto.

and his body
thrown to the
dogs, although
he was a
worthy king.
I will not
dwell any
longer on such
a hateful story.

Natwithstondyng he was a worthi kyng, 1772
Born of hih blood, swich was his auenture.
Demetrius sone aboue al erthli thyng
Hatede hym, bi record of scripture,
Of rancour denied his sepulture. 1776
And for the mateer is hatful & contrarie,
On his stori I wil no lenger tarie.

[How herodes kyng of Parthos, werred with Romayns
whiche aftir his sone & heir was slayn / made
his bastard son kyng þat anon aftir slouh his
fadir.]¹

Artabanus,
king of Parthia,
had two sons,
Mithridates and
Orodes,

TO Arthabanus whilom of Parthos king 1780
I purpose my stile to transporte,
A ful olde prince, had in his lyuyng
Sonys tweyne, bookis so reporte,
Which in his age dide hym most counfort:
Mitridate was the elder* brothir, 1784
And Herodes callid was the tothir.

and when he
died was suc-
ceeded by
Mithridates,
the elder, who
was a tyrant
and, banished,
fled to
Babylon.

Mitridate, be resoun of his age,
His fadir ded, dide aftir hym succede,
Which bashed was for tirannye & outrage. 1788
Aftirward for myscheeff & for neede
Into Babiloun he took his fliht for dreede.
The peepel anon, after his partyng,
Of indignacioun made his brothir kyng. 1792

Orodes then
became king,
and, taking
Babylon,
caused his
brother's head
to be cut off.

Thus kam Herodes to estat roiall,
Pursuede his brothir into Babiloun,
Leide a seege round aboute the wall;
Thei to hym yold[e] up the toun. 1796
Thus was his brothir brouht to confusioun, —
Afforn the castel, withoute lenger date,
Made smyte of the hed of Mitridate.

Afterwards he
made war on
Rome.
Crassus, who
came down
against him,

In Parthos aftir he took pecessioun, 1800
This yonge Herodes, of volunte & pride
Gan a werre geyn* hem of Roome toun,
Whom to withstonde thei list nat longe abide.

1784. elder] eldest B.

1785. Herodes] Orodes P.

1802. geyn] ageyn B, H, J, R 3, H 5, P.

¹ MS. J. leaf 131 recto.

- The consul Crassus kam down on ther side, 1804
 Comaundid was short processe to make,
 Toward Parthos his viage for to take.
- Crassus list nat tentren in that rewm,
 Lefte Parthos, the stori doth deuise, — 1808
 Took his weie toward Iherusalem
 To take ther a solempne enprise,
 In the temple, onli of couetise,
 Took ther, ageyn the title of rihtwisnesse, 1812
 Vp al ther tresour & ther gret richesse.
- Bi which he gat in dyuers regiouns
 Gret multitude to holde up his partie,
 Ladde with hym elleuene legiouns, 1816
 Toward Parthos faste gan hym hie,
 Bi his lettres proudli gan defie
 The said Herodes, and with gret apparaille
 Mid his contre proffred hym bataille. 1820
- The nexte morwe whan Crassus took þe feeld,
 To hym was brouht of blak a cotearmure,
 Which whan his knihtes auysili beheeld,
 Dempte it a tokne of disconfiture; 1824
 For in contrarie * Romeyns do ther cure,
 Whan ther capteyn shal fihten, or ther hed,
 His cotearmure is owther whit or red.
- A-nother tokne froward to beholde, 1828
 The firste egle bete in his baner,
 Also soone as men it dide vnfolde
 Contrariougli he tournid look & cheer,
 The bak to Crassus, folk sauh that stood[e] neer: 1832
 A pronostik to Romeyns ful certeyn,
 How Fortune that day was hem ageyn.
- Bi the flood passyng of Eufrates,
 With vnwar tempest his standardis euerichon 1836
 Into the ryuer wer cast among the pres,
 To rekne hem all, vpriht stood nat oon.
 Wherof astoned, thei wolde no ferther gon,
 Thes pronostiques made hem so affraied, 1840
 Lik men in herte dispeired & dismaied.

first went to
 Jerusalem to
 rob the temple,

and then gave
 battle to Orodes
 with eleven
 legions.

He wore a suit
 of black ar-
 mour, which
 his knights
 considered
 bad luck;

and when one of
 his banners
 was unfolded,
 the eagle
 turned his back
 on him.

His standards
 were blown into
 the Eufrates
 by a sudden
 tempest, and
 the army was
 dismayed and
 refused to
 advance.

1806. Parthia P.

1810. emprise J, H, P. 1817. Parthia P.

1823. beheeld] tooke heede H. 1825. contraire B, J.

1836. tempestis H.

- But Crassus was heedless of these tokens and crossed the Euphrates out of covetousness, so that he might despoil Parthia.
- Of the toknys Crassus was rek[e]les,
The pronostikes he dede also despise,
Took upon [hym] to passen Eufrates, 1844
Tentre Parthos onli for couetise.
To whom Herodes sendith in this wise,
That his comyng was mor for pillage
Than for kniithod, manhod or corage. 1848
- All the power of the country came down against him; his son was slain and he himself taken prisoner.
- Al the poweer of Parthos tho kam down [p. 320]
With many prefect in that mortal rage
Ageyn Crassus and them of Roome toun,
Which, as I tolde, abood on ther pillage, 1852
That turnid aftir to ther gret damage:
The sone of Crassus slayn in that affray,
His fadir take, & al upon o day.
- His head was cut off; and Orodes commanded it to be poured full of molten gold.
- His hed smet of, in whom was no diffence, 1856
And discountfid with many legioun,
The hed of Crassus brouht to the presence
Of Herodes withynne his roial toun,
Which hath comaundid gold to be brouht down, 1860
To be molte ther as he lay ded,
And to poure therof ful his hed.
- This was done because no amount of gold or treasure could staunch his thirst of covetousness.
- This thyng was doon for a moquerye,
In signe onli, the stori doth deuse, 1864
That gold nor tresour, upon no partie,
Staunche myht his thrust of couetise.
Such gredynesse ech man owith despise;
For auarice of custum in ech place 1868
Of hih prowesse doth the pris difface.
- Orodes then took all of Crassus' pennons and standards and hung them up in his temples as trophies of victory.
- Herodes aftir did serche al the wardis
Thoruh al the feild[e] upon Crassus side,
Took the penouns, baneres & standardis, 1872
And in his templis, large, longe & wide
Leet hang hem up of surquedie & pride,
In signe onli, and eek for a memorie,
He of Romeyns hath get[e] the victorie. 1876

1849. Parthia P.

1850. in that mortal rage] & mych gret Costage H, & many gret costage R 3, & much great costage P, and many gret constable J, H 5.

1852. as] om. H — ther] þe H. 1865. tresour] siluer H.

1867. owith] doth H, should P.

1870. serche] sechen H.

With whiche he list nat onli be content,
 Weenyng his fortune sholde abide stable,
 Into Surrye he hath his sone sent,
 Callid Pachorus, made hym a constable,
 Of that regioun with hym to be partable
 Of al tresours & meobles that he fond,
 Wher-euer he rood thoruhout al the* lond.

1880 Not content with all this, and believing that his fortune would continue stable, he sent his son Pacorus to Syria and made him constable there.

Thus Pachorus bi his cheualrie
 Encrese gan in his tendre age,
 Wherof Herodes, his fader, had envye,
 Feerful it sholde turne to his damage,
 List he wolde be tittle of heritage,
 Maugre hym, at his ageyn komyng
 Take upon hym in Parthos to be kyng.

1884 Afterwards, fearing that he should become too powerful, he recalled him.

Than Pachorus was callid hom ageyn,
 And of Surrie, wher in conclusioun,
 Al that he had wrouht[e] was in veyn,
 Because oon Cassius fro Roome was come doun, —
 Slouh al the peple in that regeoun
 Which apartened to Pachorus, as I fynde,
 Withoute capteyn for thei wer left behynde.

1888

1892 During Pacorus' absence Cassius came down from Rome and slew all the people in Syria,

1896

To withstonde this Romeyn Cassius
 Herodes hath his sone sent ageyn,
 Which anon aftir, the stori tellith thus,
 Amyd the feeld vnhappili was slayn.
 To truste Fortune it is a thyng but vayn,
 Which of custum to-day is fauourable,
 And to-morwe gerissli chaungable.

1900 and so Orodes sent him back again to defend his country; but he was slain.

1904

Of Pachorus deth whan the noise aroos
 And the distrussyng of his cheualrie,
 And to Herodes abidyng in Parthos
 Tidyng was brouht, ferde as he wolde die,
 Of hertli sorwe fill into frenesie:
 Heir was non left of the roial lynes,
 Sauf thretti bastardis born of concubynes.

1908 When Orodes heard of Pacorus' death, he acted as if he were going to die and nearly went mad; for he had no sons left except 30 bastards.

Thus Herodes was cast in gret seeknesse,
 His sonis deth was to hym importable,
 His worldli ioie was gon and his gladnesse,
 Fortune contrarie, which neuer can be stable;

1912 He was a very sick man; his worldly joy gone, old in years, Fortune contrary.

1882. meobles] richesse H, mouables P. 1883. the] that B.
 1884. Pacorus P.
 1889. at his ageyn] ageynst his geyn H.
 1894. Cassus H. 1895. that] þe H.

Age fill on; his liffe was nat durable: 1916
 And of o thyng most he dede hym dreede,
 Cause he hadde non heir to succede,
 Which wold[e] nat suffre hym lyue in pes.
 Til at the laste he cauhte a fantasie, 1920
 Ches a bastard callid Pharaetes,
 Because he was famous in cheualrie,
 Gaf hym the crowne & the regalie,
 Which anon aftir, breefli to conclude, 1924
 Slouh Herodes of ingratitude.

[How Fymbria a consul of Rome slouh himsilf.]¹

Four mighty
princes cast
their look on
Bechas, like
unfortunate folk
who had
fallen from
Fortune's wheel.
 A FTIR to Bochas, bi processe of the book,
 Foure mihti princis notabte of estat,
 Towardis hym thei caste cheer & look, 1928
 Lik vnto folk that wer infortunat,
 With whom Fortune had been at debat;
 For be ther maner, as it sempte weel,
 Thei wer at mischeeff fallyn from hir wheel. 1932
 The first of
them, Fimbria,
a Roman consul
sent to help
Flaccus, whom
he found slain,
presumptuously
took command
of the army and
made himself be
called emperor.
 First Fymbria, a Romeyn consuleer, [p. 321]
 Sent bi the Romeyns to a gret cite
 Callid Nichomeed[ye], cam* as a massageer
 To helpe Flaccus, & entryng that contre, 1936
 Fond Flaccus slayn bi gret aduersite.
 Aftir whos deth, his parti to auauunce,
 Of Flaccus meyne took the gouernaunce.
 Of presumpcioun, withoute auctori[t]e, 1940
 This Fymbria bi dilligent labour,
 Ful ferr abouen his staat & his degre,
 Took upon hym bi Fortunys fals fauour
 To be callid capteyn and emperour 1944
 Thoruh al that cuntre, bokis speciefie;
 Of whos presumpcioun Scilla had envie.
 The result was
that Sulla
compelled him
to take refuge
in a castle,
where he slew
himself.
 Pursued hym thoruh many gret cite,
 To a castel made hym take his fliht, 1948
 Wher Fymbria of gret necessite
 Constreyned was, maugre al his myht,
 Dispeired, forsake of eueri wiht,
 To slen hymself, the stori tellith thus, 1952
 Withynne the temple of Esculapius.

1935. cam] sent B. 1953. the] a H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 131 recto.

[Of Albynius that was slayn with stonys.]¹

ANOPER consul stood in cas semblable,
 In his tyme callid Albynyus,
 Whos hatful pride was abhominable, 1956
 To alle folkis lothsum and odious;
 Which lik a rebel, wood & furious
 Ageyn Romeyn[e]s oft[e]nere than onys, —
 Whan he lest wende slay[e]n was *with* stonys. 1960

Another consul, Albinus, abominably proud, and odious to all men, rebelled against Rome and was stoned to death.

[How Adriane of low degre falsly vsurped to be kyng of Rome whiche with his cherlys was affirbrent.]²

NEXT Adrian, which ros to hih estat:
 First in Roome born of lough degre,
 Chose a pretour, sent bi þe senat
 To gouerne of Affrik the contre, 1964
 Wher of his owne pompous auctorite
 Took upon hym bi sotil fals werkyng,
 Maugre Romeyns, ther to be crowned kyng.

Adrian, born of low degre, became a praetor, and was sent to govern Africa, where he took upon himself to be crowned king.

Whom to supporte, shortli to conclude, 1968
 Was a gret noumbre of the comounte,
 Of cherlis gadred a confus multitude,
 Title was non nor ground but volunte.
 Gentil-men than beyng in that contre, 1972
 Alle off assent and oon oppynyoun,
 Assemble[d] hem to his destruccioun.

He was upheld by churls and had no title except his own will.

At Vtices, a large gret cite,
 Hym and his cherlis besette round aboute, 1976
 Of wode & faget with large quantite
 In compas-wise closed hym withoute,
 Gadred with hym of vileyns a gret route,
 Leide on fyr, that with flawmes rede 1980
 Echon consumyd into asshes dede.

The gentlemen of the country laid siege to him in Utica, and, piling up wood and faggots, burnt him into ashes together with a large number of his oafs.

1955. Albinus P.

1961. *This stanza is as follows in P:*

Next came Adrianus which to estate full hie
 Rose in his time (and that ful sodeynlye)
 First in Rome borne but of lowe degre
 toke upon him to gouerne the countre
 Off Affrike through hys great auctorite,
 and by hys slye, subtel, and false werking,
 Mauger Romains ther to be crowned king.

1975. Vtices] Stites H, Utica P.

¹ MS. J. leaf 131 recto.

² MS. J. leaf 131 recto.

[How Synthonyus kyng of Trace þat moche coueted
affor went and deied in pouerte.]¹

Sothimus, kyng
of Thrace, came
tearfully to
Bochas; for he
was suddenly
cast from his
royal estate

NEXT Adrian cam Syntonyvs
Tofor Bochas, *with* teris spreynt his face;
As the stori rehersith vnto us, 1984
In his tyme he was kyng of Trace,
Falle sodenli fro Fortunis grace,
Cast down lowe from his estat roiall,
Which kam to Bochas to compleyne his fall. 1988

because he tried
to conquer
seven realms in
Greece that
were subject to
Rome.
He who covets
all loses all.

Whos purpos was, yiff it wolde haue be,
Seuene rewmys taue conquered *with* his hond,
That were soget to Roome the cite;
And alle seuene wer of Grekis lond. 1992
Who al couciteth, ye shal vndirstond,
He al forgoth, ful weel afferme I dar,
At vnset hour, wheroff ech man be war.

He was con-
quered by
Sentius and
died in poverty.

Longe or his conquest was brouht to a preeff, 1996
From hir wheel Fortune cast hym down.
The pretour Sencyus brouht hym to myscheef,
Deide in pouert, as maad is menciuon.
And Bochas heer maketh a digressioun, 2000
Compendiousli withynne a litil space
To descryue the region of Trace.

[Here Bochas in party makith a descripcioun of the
kyngdam of Trace and passith over lightly to
the accomplishment of his book.]²

¶ The discripsion of þe same.

Thrace, once a
very famous
country, was
named after
Tiras, son of
Japhet. It lies
towards the
north beside
the Danube,

TRACE, whilom a contre of gret fame,
And conteneth a ful large space; 2004
And of Tiras it took[e] first þe name,
Sone of Iaphet, & so was callid Trace.
Which many a day duelled in that place,
Toward Septemptrion, plenteuous of good, 2008
Beside Dynoe, the large famous flood.

1982. Next to Adrian P — Sothimus P.

1998. Sentius P.

2009. Dynoe] Danubie P.

¹ MS. J. leaf 131 recto.

² MS. J. leaf 131 recto.

Southward Trace renneth the flood Egee, [p. 322] and the Aegean
 Macedoyne stant in the occident, Sea is to the
 And the kyngdam callid Perpontide southward.
 Stant in Trace toward the orient, 2012
 Wher gret plente of blood was shad & spent,
 Whan Sencyus thoruh his hih prowesse
 Kyng Adrian ther manli dede oppresse. 2016
 Ebrus in Trace is the cheeff ryueer,
 As myn auctour maketh mencion; —
 I caste nat to tarie in this mateer,
 To make of Trace a descripcioun, 2020
 But to procede in my translacioun,
 Folwe myn auctour, which writ a long processe
 Of gret Pompeye & of his worthynesse.

The Hebrus is
 its chief river;
 but I shan't
 write any more
 about it, as I
 want to go on
 with my trans-
 lation and tell
 about Pompey
 the Great.

[How aftir many grete conquestes of Duk Pom-
 peye/ began grete werre betwixt him and Iulyus
 iij^c M! were slayn/ and at last the heed of Pom-
 peye smyten of.]¹

THIS Pompeius, of whom þe name is kouþ, 2024
 Wis & worþi & famous of prowesse, Pompey was
 Took upon hym in his tendre youth, — named after his
 Afftir his fadir bi fortunat duresse, father, whose
 Callid Pompeye, the stori berth witnesse, army he
 Distrussid was bi sodeyn deth komyng, once led
 The stori seith, thoruh thundryng & lihtnyng, 2028
 His host destroyed be the violence
 Of vnwar tempest, lik as seith the book, 2032
 Fourti thousand slayn in that pestilence;
 For feer the remnant anon þe feeld forsook, —
 Til yonge Pompeie of corage on hym took
 In his begynnyng proudli to procede 2036
 Ful lik a kniht his fadris host to leede.
 Roome that tyme bi ther discencioun
 Among hemsilf nih brouht[e] to ruyne,
 Bi the froward fals dyuysious 2040
 Tween Marie & Scilla, breefli to *termyne*,
 Till that a newe sonne gan to shyne
 Of worthynesse, which that shadde his liht,
 In manli Pompeie the noble famous kniht. 2044

when it had
 been nearly
 destroyed by
 a sudden
 tempest.

Rome was at
 that time
 almost brought
 to ruin by the
 wars of Marius
 and Sulla, and
 it was then
 that the sun
 of Pompey be-
 gan to shine.

2012. Propontidiee P. 2015. Sencyus] Sothimus P.
 2016. dede] to H. 2017. Hebrus P. 2022. long] gret H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 131 verso.

- He slew Brutus,
one of Marius'
captains, in
Lombardy
- This said Pompeie, this noble knihtli man,
At his begynnyng, thoruh his cheualrie,
The proude capteyn slouh whan he began,
Which of Marrius heeld up the partie, 2048
Callid Brutus, which in Lombardie
Was be Pompeye thoruh knihtli gouernaunce
With al his host[e] brouht vnto myschaunce.
- and also Gneus
Carbo in Sicily
to bring peace
to Rome.
- In his begynnyng Pompeie eek also, 2052
To sette Romeyns in reste & in quiete,
Oon that was callid Gnevs Carbo,
He slouh hym knihtli whan he dede hym meete,
Which in Sicile proudli heeld his seete. 2056
And alle the contres aboute hym environn
Pompeie made hem soget to Roome toun.
- Afterwards he
reconquered
Africa, defeating
Domitius.
- Aftir al this Pompeius on the se 2060
With many a shippe stuffid with vitaille
Toward Affrik made a gret arme,
And ther in haste aftir his aryuaille
With Domicius hadde a gret bataille,
Brouhte the contre thoruh his hih renoun 2064
To be to Róome vndir subieccioun.
- He pursued
Hiarbas, king of
Numidia,
Marius's ally,
- He pursued the grete myhti kyng
Callid Iertha, to Marrius faouurable,
And hadde also his roial abidyng 2068
In Numedie, a contre ful notable.
Ageyn Pompeie his poweer was nat hable;
For at a castell as thei mette in fiht,
He slouh kyng Iertha, ful lik a manli kniht. 2072
- and in a short
time brought
the whole
country to
subjection.
- Thus in breek tyme, holdyng his passage
For comoun proffit, as maad is menciouun,
Bi his wisdam & knihtli hih corage
Brouht al Affrik to subieccioun, 2076
Which stood affor[e]n in rebelliouun
To the Romeyns; but al ther sturdynesse
The said[e] Pompeie dede in haste redresse.
- In those days
one Sertorius
was Rome's
greatest enemy,
and he was
slain by his
own men.
- The grettest enmy ageyns Roome toun 2080
Thilke daies was oon Sertorius;
And of fortune, which is now up now douun,
On Pompeie onys was victorious.

2062. rivaile H, ryuaile R 3, ryuaile H 5.

2067, 72. Iertha] Iercha H, Hiarbas P. 2077. afforn stode H.

- But aftir soone of hym it happid thus: 2084
 Among his meyne fallyng at debat,
 He slay[e]n was in his most hih estat.
- Aftir the deth of this Sertorivs
Cam Perpenna Pompeie for tassaile; 2088
 And as thei mette anon[e] Pompeius
 Ful lik a kniht slouh hym in bataile,
 Which victorie gretli dide auaille
 To the Romeyns. Aftir bi gouernaunce 2092
 He brouht al Spayne to ther obeissaunce.
- Bi auctorite youe bi the Senat,
 This noble Pompeie, for vail of the cite,
 Vpon the se wolde suffre no pirat;
 Wher-euer he cam from hym thei dede flee:
 For with his shippis he scoured so the se
 And bar hym ther so manli with his hond,
 That maugre them he brouht hem to the lond. 2100
- Al the piratis and thes fals robbours
 Igadred wern out of the regioun
 Callid Silice*, which lik to rauynours
 Made ageyn Roome a conspiracioun, 2104
 Robbede, spoillede, seillyng up & doun,
 Romeyn marchauntis & peeple of ech contre,
 That non was hardi to passe bi the se.
- Aftir Pompeie hath maad the se tobeie, 2108
 That pirat non durst[e] theron abide,
 He bi the Senat was sent out to werreye
 Toward thorient, his knihtis be his side.
 And wher-so-euer that he dide ride, 2112
 Myn auctour writ, bynfluence of heuene
 His conquest was swift as wynd or leuene.
- And to ences of his eternal glorie,
 Perpetueli to geten hym a name, 2116
 His laude & renoun to putte in memorie
 He bilt a cite in Asia of gret fame,
 Callid Nichopoli, Bochas seith the same,
 Tween too floodis, the ton Araxzases, 2120
 And the tothir was callid Eufrates.

Perpenna also
 attacked
 Pompey, but
 was killed by
 him in battle.

[p. 323] By the author-
 ity of the
 Senate, Pompey
 scoured the sea
 for pirates,

who gathered
 together out of
 Cilicia, robbing
 Roman mer-
 chants.

After he had
 made the seas
 safe, he was
 sent to the
 East,

where he made
 swift conquests
 and built the
 city of
 Nicopolis,
 between the
 Euphrates and
 the Araxes,

2088. Perpenna P — for] *om.* H.

2100. brouht] brouh H. 2101. the] this H.

2103. Silice] Sicile B, J.

2120. Artaxerses H, Araxases J, Araxzases R 3, Araxes P.

as a home for
knights grown
old and poor
in the service
of Rome.

He bilte this cite onli of entent
That Romeyn knihtis, which wer falle in age,
And such as wer[e]n in the werris spent, 2124
Sike, woundid, in pouert or in rage,
Sholde of custum haue ther herbergage
In that cite alway, & nat faille
Beddyng, clothes, spendyng & vitaille. 2128

He next rode
into Armenia
and defeated
Tigranes, who
had rebelled,

Pompeye aftir rood into Armenye,
Rebel to Roome, wher Tigranes was kyng.
Fauht with hym ther, & thoruh his cheualrie
Discounfited hym, ther was non abidyng. 2132
Wher Tigranes hym silue submytting
Vnto Pompeie with eueri circumstance,
Euer tabide vndir his obeissaunce.

and then
marched in all
haste to Asia
and won the
kingdom of
Albania, where
all the
people are

Than in al haste Pompeie gan hym hie 2136
To ride in Asia, wher lik a manli kniht
He gat the kyngdam callid Albanye,
Which took his name, who-so looke ariht,
Of whiht[e]nesse; for eueri maner wiht 2140
That ther is born, be record of writyng,
Whiht as snouh[e] hath his her shynyng.

born with white
hair, and there
are dogs that
can overcome all
manner of wild
beasts.

Ther been houndis merueilous of nature,
For tassaile bolis and leouns; 2144
No wilde beeste ageyn hem may endure.
So Pompeye, bi many regiouns
Rood thoruh Armenye with his champiouns,
Wher growen herbes that may neuer feynte, 2148
What-euer colour men list with hem peynte.

He conquered
Iberia, Syria
and Phoenice,
the city named
after Phoenix,

Conquered rewmys aboute in eueri cost:
Of Hiberie he gat the regeoun,
And Artaces the kyng with al his host 2152
Discounfited, as maad is mencionn.
With his poweer to Surrie he cam doun,
Than to Fenise, a cite of gret fame,
Which of Fenix whilom took his name. 2156

and took poss-
ession of Sidon
and Ituraca,
and passed the
mountains of
Lebanon into
Judaea.

Brouhte al thes contres to subieccioun:
Of Sydonye, the myhti strong cite
Of Iturye, he took pocessioun;
Thoruh Arabie he cam doun to Iudee, 2160

2122. this] a H. 2139. ariht] riht H. 2149. to peynt H.
2155. Phenice P. 2156. Phenix P — his] þe H.
2158. Sidon P.

Which of Iewes was sumtyme the contre.
 Of Libanus he passed the mounteyn,
 Wher cedris growe[n], as auctour[e]s seyn.

Sent [to]forn hym, entryng in that reum, 2164 Jerusalem was
 Oon Gabynus, a myhti strong constable; besieged by
 Regnyng that tyme in Iherusalem Gabinus for
 Aristobolus, a prince ful notable. three months,
 And for the temple was strong & nat permiable, 2168 Aristobolus
 Leide a siege aboute in breede & lengthe then reigning,
 Space of thre monethes, & gat it so bi strengthe.

Thre thousand Iewes vndir the wal wer founde, and 3000 Jews
 Ded at thassat, which made resistance; 2172 died at the
 The wal aftir doun beten to the* grounde. assault.

Pompeye afftir bi sturdi violence
 Is entrid in withoute reuerence,
 Sancta sanctorum men that place call, 2176
 Made Hircanius hiest preest of all,

The grete bisshop Aristobolus, [p. 324] Aristobolus was
 Sent to Roome in myhti cheynis bounde. sent to Rome
 Toward Septemptrion, I fynde write thus, 2180 in chains, and
 Gat seuene kyngdames with citees wallid rounde, Pompey sub-
 Rebel to Roome, he dide hem confounde; dued seven
 With mihti suerd[e] gat al the contre rebel countries,
 Fro Caucasus doun to the Red[e] Se. 2184 conquering from
 the Caucasus
 to the
 Red Sea.

In his conquest, it sempte verraily
 As the goddis hadde doon ther cure,
 And that Fortune was with hem eek besi,
 This myhti Pompeye prince to assure, 2188
 What-euer hym list be conquest to recure:
 In Spaigne he gat, whan thei wer rebell,
 Thre hundred citees & sixty* strong castell.

Hard to remembre his conquestis euerichon, 2192 which were so
 Alle the prowessis of this knihtli man: many that it is
 Toward the parti of Septemptrioun hard to remem-
 A thousand castell I fynde that he wan, ber them all.

Sixe hundred mo, fro tyme that he gan, 2196
 Eihte & thretti cites, out of doute,
 With myhti wallis closed round aboute.

2164. toforn] frome H.

2168. nat] om. J — permiable] pregnable P. 2170. thre] iij B.

2173. doun beten to the] beten doun to B, J, H, R 3, P.

2191. sixty] thretti B. 2195. castellys] J.

- He was chosen consul three times; and if you read, you will find that he was the peer of Alexander and Hercules.
- Peise his deedis, his conquestis marciall:
Thries consul chose for his eneres; 2200
Reed, ye shal fynde how he was egall
To Alisandre or to Hercules.
Wher that euere he put hymself in pres,
Al cam to hand, concludyng, ye may see, 2204
To comoun proffit of Roome the cite.
- Tryphanes, famous of eloquence, was chosen to put his conquests in writing at the public expense.
- His marciall deedis to putte in remembraunce,
Oon was chose to do his dilligence 2208
To enacte* his conquest in substaunce
And his kniethod of synguler excellence;
And Triffanes, famous of elloquence,
Assigned was onto that labour,
Took his guerdoun of ther comoun tresour. 2212
- Pompey became chief governor of Rome, Caesar then absent in Gaul,
- Pompeye of Roome was cheef gouernour,
Cesar absent in Gaule, a ferre* contre,
Which tyme Pompeie stood in gret fauour
Bothe of Fortune and Roome the cite, 2216
Sunwhat maad blynd of his prosperite,
Purposyng, in his clymbyng nat stable,
He wolde haue non that wer to hym semblable.
- but, as neither love nor high worship will have fellowship, he desired to be alone in power,
- Vnto purpos was saide ful yore agon, 2220
How that loue nouter hih lordshippe, —
Preeff hath be maad in many mo than oon, —
Nouter of hem wolde haue no felashipe;
Ech bi his oon wolde his parti keepe: 2224
In thes too caas, brothir onto brothir
Failleth at a poynt; ech wil put out othir.
- and made all the laws himself.
- To Pompeye resortyng now ageyn, —
He took on hym al the gouernaille 2228
Of the Romeyns, as ye haue herd me seyn,
Bothe of estatis, comouns & poraille,
And for his part al that myhte [a]vaille
In makyng lawes, statut or decre, 2232
Al up engrosed bi his auctorite.
- The enemies of Caesar conspired against him and enacted a statute forbidding men to hold office while absent from Rome.
- Folk this while which that had envie
Toward Cesar in his longe absence,
Leet make a lawe bi conspiracye 2236
And a statut, concludyng in sentence,
Withoute excepcioun, fauour or* reuerence,

2208. enacte] enerece B, J. 2214. ferre] gret B.
2225. caas] cases P, casys H 5. 2230. comoun H.
2238. or] of B.

- No man sholde, be wil of the Senat,
In his absence be chose to non estat, 2240
Nor been admittid be no procutour
Tae auctorite of dignite [n]or offis,
In court of tribun nor off senatour
To be promotid; this was ther auys, 2244
Wer he neuer so manli nor so wis.
This lawe ordeyned be folk envious,
For hyndryng onli of Cesar Iulius.
- Whan Iulius knew al ther fals werking, 2248
Fro Gaule sente up to the cite,
Al the Senat requeryng be writyng
To graunte hym bi ther auctorite
Of tryumphe the notable dignite, 2252
To haue also thoffis and thestat
Callid in Roome the seconde consulat,
For hym aleggyng many gret victorie
In dyuers contres doon for the cite, 2256
Many conquest notable of memorie
Wrouht bi his kniethod; for which of equite
Requeryng them guerdoned for to bee.
But contrarie vnto his entent 2260
Denied hym al bi oon assent,
Which was cheeff ground, roote & occasioun [p. 325] 2264
That brouht in first the contrauersie,
Cyuile discordes, froward dyuysioun,
Whan eueri man drouh to his partie
Of old hatreede to kyndle newe envie,
Causing princis Iulius & Pompeie
To ther confusioun ech othir to werreye. 2268
- The tryumphe denied to Cesar, —
Fraude of Pompeie made hym therof faile,
Of whos deceit Iulius was war,—
Made hym redi with many strong bataille, 2272
Passed ouer the Alpies of Itaille,
Fulli in purpos, pleykli, yiff he myhte,
With the Romeyns and Pompeie for to fihte.
- Thus gan the werre atween thes princis tweyne. 2276
Pompeye chose for parti of the toun
To been ther duk & capteyn souereyne
Ageyn Cesar, as maad is mencioniun.

When Julius heard of this he demanded the triumph and the estate of second consul,

alleging his conquests as his right to reward. The Senate, however,

denied his request, and that was the chief cause of the civil war.

Cæsar knew the fraud of Pompey and, crossing the Alps,

prepared to fight the Romans; and thus the wars between these two princes began.

- And thus alas the desolacioun 2280
 Suede of the cite, be many straunge signe,
 With vnkouth toknis, whan thei gan maligne.
- At their begin- At the gynnynge of thes woful werris,
 ning strange In the heuene wer seyn dreedful sihtes — 2284
 comets and Sparklyng brondis, cometis, vnkouth sterris,
 uncouth stars In the heuene wer seyn dreedful sihtes —
 were seen in With flawme of fyr many feerful lihtes
 the sky, burning Like laumpis brennyng al the longe nihtes,
 like lamps all Castyng of speres, dartis in the hair, 2288
 night long, and spears Wherbi Romeyns fill in gret despair.
 and darts
 flew about in
 the air.
- Great flashes From the parti of Septemprion
 of lightning Toward Roome cam ful gret lihtnyng;
 came from the At non seyn sterris; lik blood the sunne shon; 2292
 north, and The moone eclipsed, terrible in shewyng;
 stars were The mount[e] Ethna, feerfulli brennyng,
 visible at noon. From his cauernis cast up flawmys rede
 The sun shone Toward Itaille, which set hem in gret dreede. 2296
 like blood; the
 moon eclipsed;
 and Mt. Ætna
 cast red flames
 towards Italy
 from his cauerns.
- Terrible waves Out of Karibdis, a daunger of the se,
 boiled up at Wawes terrible boiled up lik blood;
 Charybdis; and From the rokkes that in Cecile bee
 from the rocks From the rokkes that in Cecile bee
 of Sicily was Was herd howlyng of houndis that wer wood. 2300
 heard the howling of mad
 hounds. Vesta the goddesse, in Roome ther she stood,
 Mid hir temple was al with teres spreynt,
 Whan the heuenli fyris wern afforn hir queynt.
- The statue of Afforn this goddesse, at the aulter princepall 2304
 of Vesta was Was fyr perpetuel brennyng day & niht,
 sprinkled with Til werris cyuyle, hatful & mortal,
 tears; the per- Gan* among Romeyns, & the contagious fiht.
 petual fire that Than of vengauce anon was queynt the liht 2308
 burned before Tofor Vesta, the fire partyng on tweyne,
 her parted in Of dyuisioun a tokne ful certeyne.
 twain.
- Castles were Erthe-quaues sodeyn & terrible
 overturned by Ouertournede castellis vp-so-doun; 2312
 sudden earth- With rage floodis hidous & horrible
 quakes; there Neptunvs dide gret destruccioun,
 were tidal Drowned villages & many a mansioun,
 waves, drowning Neptunvs dide gret destruccioun,
 villages and Drowned villages & many a mansioun,
 upsetting the Reuersed in templis of gold al ther vessellis, 2316
 golden vessels in the temples. Threw doun baners, standardis & penselis.

2292. noon H, J. 2302. hir] his H.

2304. aulter] Aucteer H. 2307. Gan] Gat B.

Geyn these signes was founde non arest,
The vnwar myscheeff koude no man declyne.

Leouns, wolues kam doun fro the forest

With many othir beestis sauagyne;

Wilde beris & serpentis of rauyne

Kam to the cite; & summe ageyn[e]s kynde

Spak as do men, in Bochas thus I fynde.

Dyuers foulis,* which of ther nature

Haue in custum to fleen but a-niht,

Affor thes werris dede hemsilf assure

Euene at mydday, whan Phebus is most briht,

Thoruh the cite for to take her fliht.

Wommen with childre — the stori list nat feyne —

Brouht fourth summe that hadde hedis tweyne.

Tofor thes werris, that callid wer cyuile,

Senatours beyng in Roome toun

Cam to the woman that callid was Cybile,

Vnto hire made this questioun:

To declare bi short conclusioun,

Among ther other questioun[e]s all,

Of ther cite what fortune sholde fall?

To whom she gaff an ansuere ful obscure,

Wherupon she made hem sore muse:

Took hem sixe lettres set in pleyⁿ scripture,

Which in no wise thei myhte nat refuse,

For false rihtis that thei dede vse;

Lik the thre lettres twies set in noumbre,

Who vndirstondeth, thei shal the toun encoumbre.

Thre R. R. R. first[e] she set on a rowe

And thre F. F. F. in ordre faste bi, —

Long tyme aftir or thei koude knowe

Thexposicioun therof openly,

Til ther dyuynours gan serche sotilly

To fynde[n] out, lik to ther entente,

Be the sexe lettres what Cibile mente.

Off this woord Regnum the first lettre is R,

So is the capital off Roome the cite;

Who looke ariht, the thridde is nat ferrø, —

No man could
turn away the
mischief.

2320 Lions and
wolves came
down from the
forests to
Rome, wild
bears and
ferocious ser-
pents speaking
the language
of men.

2324 Night birds
were seen flying
at midday;
and some
women brought
forth children
with two heads.

2332 Before the wars
the senators
went to Sibylla
and inquired
the fate of
the city.

2336

She set six
letters in a row,

2340

2344

[p. 326] three R's and
three F's; and
it was long
before the
diviners could
find out that
the letters
meant,

2348

2352

Regnum
Romae
Ruet;

2318. founde] doon H. 2324. thus] as H.

2325. foulis] folkis B, folkys J. 2326. on niht H.

2340. sore] full sore H. 2341. sixe] vj B — pleyⁿ] om. H.

2351. lik] firste lik H. 2352. the] thes H.

2354. 1st the] om. H.

- This woord Ruet gynneþ with R, parde. 2356
 Of which[e] woordes whan thei ioyned be,
 The sentence concludeth in meenyng,
 Off ther cite the ruynous fallyng.
- Ferro, Flamma, Fames.** Touchyng thre F. F. F., who can aduertise, 2360
 Of this woord Ferro, F go[e]th toforþ;
 And the cheeff lettre off Fames to deuise
 Is F also, the processe weel forth born.
 The same of Flamma, bi which þe toun was lorn, 2364
 Off which resouns make a coniunccioun,
 Causing of Roome fynal destruccioun.
- Fire, sword and hunger, froward ambition, the shewing of comets and strange stars and wilful division accomplished the ruin of Rome. Fyr, swerd & hunger caused be the werris,
 Desyr of clymyng, froward ambicioun, 2368
 Shewyng of cometis & of vnkouth sterris,
 With pronostikes off [ther] deserccioun,
 Werst of alle, wilful dyuysioun
 Among hemsilff bi vnwar violence, 2372
 Off lettres sexe accomplisshid the sentence.
- The wars between Cesar and Pompey lasted long and caused the death of many a Roman, as Lucan testified. The suerd of Cesar, werris of Pompeye,
 Twen thës tweyne lastyng a long[e] while, 2376
 Made many Romeyn & Italien to deie,
 Bi the batailes that callid wer cyuile,
 With prophecies remembred of Cebile,
 As the wrytyng ful weel reherse can, 2380
 Of the old poete that callid was Lucan.
- In the temple of Mars the priests offered up their blood with lamentacions; for the gods were contrary to Rome. In Martes temple on heihte wher he stood,
 And Bellona, the goddesse despitous,
 The preestes cried & offred up ther blood
 With lamentaciouns, lik folkis furious, 2384
 Cause off toknys fell and contrarious
 Which that wer shewed in that seyntuarie,
 How ther goddis to Romeyns wer contrarie.
- The voices of madmen were heard among the dead bones in their graves, and the cry of ghosts in field and cavern, terrifying the agriculturists. Mong dede bonys that leyn in ther grauis 2388
 Wer vois es herd lik wood men in ther rages,
 Cry of goostis in cauernys & causy,
 Herd in feeldis, paththis & passages;
 Laboureres fledde hom to ther villages. 2392
 Serpentis, adderes, scaled siluer* briht,
 Wer ouer Roome seyn fleeyng al the niht.

2373. sexe] vj B.

2375. attween H — longe] gret H, J, great P. 2378. of] by H.

2387. ther] þat H. 2390. &] & in H.

2393. siluer] wonder B.

Another tokne, pitous for to heere,
 Which astoned many proud Romeyn,
 Dede bodies* dide in the feeld appeere,
 Which in bataille hadde afforn be slayn,
 From ther tombis arisyng wher thei layn,
 Which in the werris, woful & despitous,
 Wer slayn be Scilla & proude Marrius.

2396 Serpents with
 scales of silver
 flew over the
 city all the
 night, and
 corpses of men
 slain before in
 the wars of
 Marius and
 Sulla arose
 from their
 tombs.

It was eek tolde bi ther dyuynours,
 How Pompeyus was lik to haue a fall,
 And how thestat of Romeyn emperours
 With ther tryumphes that been imperial
 At Iulius first ther begynne* shal;
 And afftir hym thestat shal foort[h] proceede
 Be eleccioun or lyneal kynreede.

2404 Pompey's fall
 was fore-
 told by
 diviners, who
 said also that
 the estate of
 Roman
 emperor would
 begin with
 Cæsar.

2408

To withstonde the power of Cesar,
 Which toward Roome took his weie riht,
 Pompeye was sent, wis, manli & riht war;
 But whan he herd[e] tellyn of the myht
 Of Iulius, he took hym to the fliht;
 Eek alle the senatours with hym dede flee
 Toward Epire, in Grece a strong cite.

2412 Pompey was
 sent out to
 withstand the
 power of
 Cæsar, but
 fled together
 with the
 senators to
 Epirus,

Pompeye was old, famous in cheualrie,
 Cesar but yong [&] hardi for tassaille.
 Vppon the pleyns of Grece & Thesalie
 Pompeye & he hadde a gret bataille:
 Geyn Iulius suerd no Romeyn mihte auaille;
 Constreyned of force the feeld[e] to forsake,
 Toward Egipt thei haue the weie take.

2416 where there
 was a great
 battle on the
 plains of Thes-
 saly. Pompey
 lost and sought
 refuge in
 Egypt,

2420

Pompeye thoruh Cipre cam to Tholome,
 Bi a gret watir at Paphus dede aryue;
 On the stronde ther he dide see
 A statli place, & up he wente blyue,
 The name of which, pleynli to descryue,
 Cacabosile the contre dede it call,
 Of which[e] name the fortune is thus fall:

2424 journeying
 by way of
 Cyprus and
 landing first at
 Catobasilea,
 which means
 "unfortunate
 arrival."

2428

2397. bodies] bonys B.

2406. ther] om. J — begynnnyng B.

2417. &] om. J, R 3.

2418. playn H.

2424. Paphos P.

2426. & ther he went vp blive H.

2428. Cacobasile P.

At this he
fell in despair,
and, sailing on,
came to Egypt.

The name tokne of froward arryuauill, [p. 327]
Sownyng in Greek vnhappi auenture.
Be which the trust of Pompeie did[e] faille, — 2432
Fill in dispeir, myht it nat recure, —
Forsook that ile, dede his besi cure
To take a shipp, so bi the se saillyng
Toward Egipt, wher Tholome was kyng. 2436

He hoped to be
helped by
Ptolemy; but
Ptolemy, pre-
tending friend-
ship, told his
men to murder
him,

Of trust he fledde to this Tholome,
In hope he sholde fynde in hym socour:
Fair cheer shewed vndir duplicite,
Failed at the poynt, gaf hym feynt fauour, 2440
Al-be Pompeye bi his freendli labour
Crownid hym kyng in Egipt, as I fynde,
To whom ageyn he was fals & vnkynde.

To meete Pompeye he lect stuffe a barge 2444
Be a maner pretence of freendliheede,
Gaff his meynē that wer ther in charge
To moordre Pompeie, behiht hem a gret meede.
Tweyne ther wern, which to hym bar hatreede; 2448
And in the vessel, *with* sharp suerdis whette,
Or he was war[e], of his hed thei smette.

and Achilles
and Photinus
smote off his
head. Born of
gentle stock, he
was one of
the best knights
of his time;

The ton of hem was callid Achilles,
And his felawe namyd was Fotyne. 2452
Took up the hed[e] of that prince, alas,
Famous in knihthod, born of gentil lyne,
Among Romeyns, as auctours determyne,
Holde in his tyme, yiff men doon hym riht, 2456
Thoruh al the world[e] oon the beste kniht.

but earthly
princes, for all
their pompous
fame, first took
their title by
murder and
extortion; and
by the burning
of countries and
conquest by
violence rose to
dominion.
300,000 men,
not counting
kings and
praetors, con-
suls and cen-
turiens, were
slain.

Thus erthli princis, *with* al ther pompous fame,
Which thoruh the* world yiuēþ so gret a soun,
Of slauhtre & moordre thei took[e] first *per* name, 2460
Bi fals raayne and extorsioun
Clamb up so first to domynacioun.
Brennyng of contres, conquest bi violence
Sette hem in chaires of worldli excellence. 2464
In this bataile, which callid was cyuyle,
Hold atween Pompeye & Cesar Iulius,
Thre hundred thousand slay[e]n in a while,
Thre thousand take, the stori tellith thus, 2468

2440. Failed] faillyng H. 2448. bar] born H.
2459. the] al the B, H, J, R 3, H 5, P.

Withoute princis notable & glorious,
As kyngis, pretours, reknid all attonys,
Tribunys, consulis & centuryonys.

Phebus on the soil myht nat his bemys spreede, 2472 The rays of
Nor on the ground shewe out his cleer[e] liht; the sun could
Men that wer slay[e]n lay so thikke on breede, not strike the
That of the erthe no man hadde a siht. ground for the
Wolues, beres, rauynous foul off fliht, dead, which
Kam gret plente to feede hem ther ech day were eaten by
Beside the ryueer of Nile wher thei lay. 2476 wolves and
bears and
ravenous fowls.

Gobetis of flesh, which foulis dede arace
Fro dede bodies, born up in the hair, 2480 Gobbets of flesh
Fill from ther clees vpon Iulius face, fell from the
Amyd the feeld wher he had his repair. claws of birds
Made his visage bloodi & nat fair, upon Julius'
Al-be that he to his ences of glorie face, soiling it
Hadde thilke day of Romeyns the victorie. 2484 with blood.

The hed of Pompeye, brouht *with* his statli ring,
Offrid up to Iulius hih presence,
He be *compassioun*, the moordre aduertisyng, 2488 The head of
Of his innat imperial excellence Pompey and
Brast out to weepe, & in his aduertense his ring of
Thouhte gret pite, a prince of so gret myht state were
Sholde so be slayn, that* was so good a knyht. 2492 brought to
Cæsar, who
burst into tears
of pity.

The corps abood withoute sepulture,
Til oon Coodrus of *compassioun*
Aftir the bataille & disconfiture
Besouht[e] hym, of gret affeccioun, 2496 His body was
To hide the trunke lowe in the sondis *doun*. buried by
Souhte tymbir, and ther he fond but smal, Codrus in the
To doon exequies with fires* funeral. sand, and
there was
but little wood
for a funeral
pyre.

Now, sithe this prince kam to such myscheeff, 2500 What trust is
Moordred and slayn bi Tholome the kyng: there in any
Heer of hir power Fortune hath maad a preeff, worldly thing?
What trust ther is in any worldli thyng. Think of this
Aftir his deth wantid he nat buriyng? — proud Pompey
This proude Pompeie, so famous of his hond, deuoured by
Of fissh deuoured, as he lay on quik sond! 2504 fishes, as he lay
in quicksand.

2482. had] made H — his] *om.* J.

2489. Iunat B. 2492. that] & B. 2499. fires] feestis B.

What store
should men set
by transitory
things and
worldly glory?

What shal men sette bi poweer or noblesse
Of* slidyng goodis or any worldli glorie, 2508
Which to restreyne may be no sekirnesse?
Fortune and the world is transitorye;
Thouh Mars to-day yiue a man victorie,
Parcas to-morwe vnwarli he shal deie, — 2512
I take record of Cesar and Pompeie.

Since all stands
under the con-
trol of Fortune,
look, worldly
men, to that
place where
the Blind Lady
has no power.

Sith al stant vndir daunger of Fortune, [p. 328]
Ye worldli men doth your look up-dresse
To thilke place wher ioie doth ay contune; 2516
The Blynde Ladi hath ther non interesse.
Set pride aside, tak you to meeknesse,
To sue vertu doth treuli your labour,
Geyn worldli pompe mak Pompeie your merour! 2520

Lenvoye.

This tragedy of
Duke Pompey
declares that
vain ambition
to have lordship
was the chief
cause of the
war between
him and Cesar.

THIS tragedie of the duk Pompeie
Declareth in gros þe cheef occasioun
Whi he and Cesar gan first to werreie,
Ech ageyn othir, thoruh veyn ambicioun 2524
To haue lordshipe and domynacioun
Ouer the Romeyns, bi fauour, fraude or myht, —
Pocessioun take no fors of wrong or riht.

Pride is un-
willing to obey
truth; wise
policy, prudent
counsel and
discretion are
far away.
Possession cares
not for wrong
or right.

To trouthis parti pride is loth tobeie; 2528
Extort poweer doth gret destruccioun;
Wis policie al out of the weie,
Prudent counsail, age with discrecioun
Loste ther liberte of free eleccioun. 2532
Who was most strong, *with* hym heeld euery wiht, —
Pocessioun take no fors of wrong nor riht.

Finally Fortune
cast them both
down from her
wheel; for their
eyes were made
blind by subtile
deceit, fraud
and collusion.

Swich dyuysioun made many man to deie,
Brouhte the cite to desolacioun. 2536
With these too princis Fortune list to pleie,
Til from hir wheel she cast hem bothe down.
Sotil deceit, fraude & collusioun
Bambicious clymyng blente ther bothe liht, — 2540
Pocessioun take no fors of wrong nor riht.

Noble princis, remembreth what I seie,
 Peiseth this stori withyne in *your* resoun,
 Of fals surmountyng auarice berth þe keie,
 Record of Cesar, Pompeye of Roome toun,
 Whos wilful werris, hatful discencioun
 Yiueth cleer warnyng to you & eueri wiht,
 No cley m is worth withoute title of riht.

2544

Noble Princes,
 remember
 Cæsar and
 Pompey of
 Rome.
 No claim is
 valid without
 title of right.

2548

[How victorious Iulius Cesar brent the vessels of
 Tholome slouh Achilles that wolde ha moordred
 him & after grete victories himsilf was mordred
 with boidekens bi brutus Cassius.]¹

AFFTIR the woful compleint lamentable
 Of Pompeis dethe, pitous for to heere,
 Werris remembrid, *with* tresouns importable,
 Compassid fraudis farcid *with* fair cheere,
 Conspired moordre, rehersid the maneere
 How kyng Tholome, fraudulent of corage,
 The deth conspired of Pompeie fall in age.

2552

After the woeful
 complaint of
 Pompey's death
 and the manner
 of King Ptole-
 my's conspir-
 ing it,

The processe tolde, I holde it wer but veyn
 Therof to write a newe tragedie;
 Thyng onys said, it to reherse ageyn,
 It wer but idil, as for that partie.
 But how Cesar went out of Thessalie,
 Kam Talisaundre to logge hym in that place,
 I wil remembre with support of *your* grace.

2556

I hold it vain
 to write thereof
 a new tragedy;
 but I will tell
 how Cæsar
 went to Alex-
 andria

2560

He logged was in his paleis roiall,
 Wher he was besi, be diligent labour
 Thoruh that regioun in templis ouerall
 To spoile goddis and haue al ther tresour,
 Wher he was mokkid, fond ther no fauour;
 For Achilles, which that slouh Pompeie,
 Cast hym with Cesar proudli to werreie.

2564

and busied him-
 self in spoiling
 temples, finding
 little encourage-
 ment, for
 Achilles, who
 slew Pompey,

2568

His purpos was to falle upon Cesar,
 As of nature was his condicioun
 Falsli to moordre men or thei wer war,—
 Bi sum sleihte to fynde occasioun
 To destroye Iulius be tresoun,
 And tacomplisshe his purpos in partie
 Hadde twenti thousand in his cumpanye.

2572

withstood him
 with 20,000
 men, hoping
 to fall upon
 and destroy
 him.

2576

¹ MS. J. leaf 134 recto.

256I. Alexandry P.

- Achillas, who was leader and constable of the Egyptians, intended to give battle to the Romans, but Cæsar burnt Ptolemy's navy
- This Achillas, fals, cruel, deceyuable,
Cast hym deceyue Cesar yif he myhte,
Of Thegipcien's leder and constable
With the Romeyns purposeth for to fihte. 2580
But whan Cesar therof hadde a sihte,
He is descendid, & faste bi the se
Brent al the nauue of kyng Tholome.
- together with a great part of the city and the famous library of 40 000 volumes.
- Alle the vesselis wer dryue up with a flood 2584
To gret damage of seide Tholome;
Iulius brente hem euene ther thei stood,
And a gret part beside of the cite.
And ther was brent, which was ful gret pite, 2588
The famous librarie in Egipt of the kyng,
Ful fourti thousande volumys ther liggynge.
- Bochas says that it was highly commendable of Ptolemy to gather together such a notable collection of books for the use of scholars.
- In which thyng Bochas reherseth in sentence,
How Tholome was gretli comendable, 2592
That thoruh his besi roial prouydence
Made hymself a librarie so notable;
For to al clerkis in studie that wer hable,
Of seuene sciences, the stori maketh mynde, 2596
Lik ther desire myhte bookis fynde.
- After this fire, there was a battle, and Cesar, near defeat, took a barge from Egypt
- Afftir this fyr, in Farus the contre, [p. 329]
The Egipcien's hadde a gret bataille, 2600
Wher Cesar was of gret necessite
That day constreyned, whan the feeld gan faille,
Take a barge from Egipt for to saille,
But so gret pres[e] folwed at his bak,
Almost the vessel was lik to go to wrak. 2604
- and narrowly escaped being wrecked. He was forced to swim 200 paces to land in his heavy armour.
- Cesar armyd, with lettres in his hond,
Put his persone that day in auenture;
Two hundred pas manly swam to lond,
And kunnyngli to lond he doth recure, 2608
Natwithstondyng his heuy strong armure.
But yit toforn or Cesar took the se,
He in the feeld hadde take Tholome.
- He then took Ptolemy prisoner and slew Achillas and all his fellows.
- And Achillas, the moordrere of Pompeie, 2612
With alle his felawes that wer of assent
Wer slayn that day; ther went[e] non aweye:
Many Egipcien the same tyme brent.
Cesar of mercy for Tholome hath sent, 2616
2582. the] om. H. 2590. thousande] M B.
2598. Pharos P. 2604. to wrak] awrak H.

- To Alisaundre sent hym hom of newe,
 Charging he sholde to Romeyns forth be trewe.
- But whan he was delyuered fro prisoun,
 Of Egipcians in Alisaundre the cite, 2620
 From eueri coost he gadred gret foisoun,
 Ageyn Iulius kam down with his meyne;
 But yit for al his hasti cruelte,
 Swich resistence Cesar gan to make, 2624
 That* twenti thousand that day wer slayn & take.
- Sixti galeis nat ferr fro the lond,
 Tuelue thousand men komyng to Tholome, —
 Echon wer yolde and brouht onto the hond 2628
 Of Iulius his prisoneres to bee.
- Than Tholomeus besied hym to flee
 Toward the watir, wher maugre al his myht,
 He drowned was in his gret hasti fliht. 2632
- He knowen was bi his riche haberioun,
 Of gold and steel[e] it was entermaylid,
 Bi Cesar sent onto the roial toun,
 Which for diffence was strongli enbatailed, — 2636
 Bokelis of gold richeli enamailed,
 Which[e] toknis anon as thei haue seyn,
 Dispeired to Cesar sente ageyn.
- Of them to Cesar was maad feith & homage; 2640
 The rewme of Egypt brouht to subieccioun,
 Til he of grace and merciful corage*
 To Cleopatra gaff al that regioun, 2644
 Longyng to hire be successioun,
 Be title of riht that tyme & non othir,
 Because only Tholome was hir brothir.
- Kyng Lagus whilom in his testament,
 Fadir to Cleopatra & to Tholome, 2648
 Toforn his deth bi gret auisement
 Cleerli enacted his laste volunte,
 That his kyngdam departid sholde be,
 Half to Tholome, as his bequethe was, 2652
 The tothir halff to queen Cleopatras.

Ptolemy was taken to mercy and sent home with the bidding to be loyal to Rome; but as soon as he was set free he came down against Cæsar with an army and lost 20,000 of his men,

60 galleys and 12,000 more men, who were on their way to aid him.

Ptolemy fled towards the sea and was drowned. His body was recognized by its rich armour with golden buckles.

The Egyptians submitted to Cæsar, and he made Cleopatra, Ptolemy's sister, queen.

Their father had devised the kingdom to both of them, each to rule one half;

2620. Alisaundry P. 2625. That] Than B.

2632. his] þe H.

2634. entirmailed J, entirmailed R 3, entyrmaylled H 5, entermayled P.

2642. corage] werkyng B. 2646. only] only þat H.

but Ptolemy
had kept his
sister in prison
to deprive her
of her share.

She bi hir brothir was holde in prisoun
To keepe hir wrongli from hir heritage,
Wheroff Cesar hadde compassioun, 2656
Purposed hym to refourme hir damage.
And whil that he heeld ther his hostage,
Of equite, of lawe and of resoun,
Of al Egipt gaff hir pecessioun. 2660

Then came
Juba, king of
Lybia, a proud
and cruel man,
who hated the
last Scipio be-
cause he suc-
ceeded Pompey
as consul and
wore purple,
which Juba
claimed was
fitting only for
himself as king.

¶ Than kam Iuba, of Libie lord & kyng,
Sowere of stryues and discencioun,
Proud, hih of port, cruel in werkyng,
Which in especial hadde indignacioun 2664
Vnto the worthi laste Scipioun,
Cause he was chose, lik as bookis seie,
To succede next consul to Pompeie.

This Iuba eek bar to hym gret hatrede,
Souht a quarel ageyn hym for o thyng,
Cause that he was clad in purpil weede,
For hym aleggyng, how onli that clothyng
No maner estat sholde vse but a kyng: 2672
Mente for hymself, sitting in roial throne,
He wold as kyng that colour were* allone.

Bochas makes a
digression here
and says that
no nation is so
wasteful of
clothing as the
people of
Almayne.

Heer myn auctour maketh a digressioun,
Puttyng exaample of Almayne the contre; 2676
Seith that ther is non othir nacioun
Touchyng array that is so disgise
In wast of cloth and superfluite,
Rehersyng her* in ful pleyn langage, 2680
In many wise such wast doth gret damage.

Such super-
fluity in attire
causes pride
and gives occa-
sion for lust
and brings
people to
poverty and
makes the rich
disdainful of
the poor.

It causeth pride and ambicioun, [p. 330]
Ageyn the vertu of humylite;
To lecherie it yiveth occasioun, 2684
Which is contrarie* vnto chastite.
Wast of array sett folk in pouerte,
Causeth also such costage spent in veyn
Off othir porere to haue ful gret disdeyn. 2688

2658. that] om. H.

2662. dissenciouns H.

2674. that colour were] vse that colour B.

2680. her] ther B.

2685. contraire B, J.

- Wher superfluite is vsid of aray,
 Riot folweth, proud port & idilnesse;
 With wast of tyme dryue forth the day,
 Late drynkyng, wach, surfet, dronkenesse,
 Engendreth feueres & many gret excesse.
 Thus eueri surfet englued is to othir,
 And o mysreule bryngeth in anothir.
- God suffreth weel ther be a difference
 Touchyng array, as men been of degre:
 Hih estatis, that stonde in excellence,
 Mut be preferrid, of resoun men may see;
 As cloth of gold, stonis & perre
 Was for princis, with othir fressh clothynge,
 But specialli purpil was for kyngis.
- Thus was ther set, of hih discrecioun,
 Array accordyng to princis hih noblesse;
 And for othir estatis lower down,
 Lik ther degrees tween pouert & richesse,
 An ordre kept from scarsete & excesse,
 A mene prouided atween hih & lowe,
 Lich to hymselff[e] ech man may be knowe.
- But kyng Iuba, insolent & mad,
 Of surquedie kauht [an] oppynyoun
 That non but he in purpil shal* be clad,
 Causyng debat tween hym & Scipioun.
 Yit wer thei parti bothe with Roome toun
 Ageyn Cesar, and drouh toward Pompeie,
 For which at myscheef bothe thei dide deie.
- Whan Iuba felte hymself of noun poweer
 Ageyn Cesar to holde chaumpartie,
 For sorwe he loste contenance & cheer;
 Of hih disdeyn[e] and malencolie
 Callid on Pectryn, a kniht off his allie,
 Made hym bassent that thei wer bothe fayn
 Felli to fihte til oon off hem was slayn.
- Ageyn nature was this straunge fiht,
 Ech to slen othir, & knew no cause whi, —
 But for kyng Iuba was an hardi kniht,
 He slouh his felawe and abood proudli,

Riot, proud behaviour, idleness and drunkenness follow, engendering fevers and agues: each surfeit gives rise to another, and all move in a vicious circle.

God permits a difference in clothing: high estates must be well dressed and wear cloth of gold and jewels; and purple is the colour for kings.

Other estates lower down should array themselves according to their degrees.

King Juba, insolent and mad, thought that he alone was entitled to wear purple, and quarrelled with Scipio, although both were against Cæsar.

When he saw that he was too weak to fight Cæsar, he lost heart, and in a rage challenged Petreus, a knight of his acquaintance, to mortal combat.

Juba killed his friend Petreus, and then chose to die himself rather than live in bondage.

2693. excesse H, J, R 3, P, H 5. 2708. providyng H.

2712. but he non shal in purpil B.

2721. peyntryn H, Peitryn J, Peytryn R 3, H 5, Petreus P.

And rather ches to deien wilfulli, 2728
 Of hih despiht[e] & of proud corage,
 Than vndir Cesar to lyuen in seruage.

So he summoned another friend, and, giving him a large reward, bade him smite off his head.

Maad calle a man whom he loued weel,
 Gaff vnto hym gret gold & gret guerdoun 2732
 To take a suerd[e] forgid of fyn steel,
 And make theroff no long dilacioun,
 But bad he sholde, for short conclusioun,
 Take upon hym, & haue no feer nor dreed, 2736
 Withoute tarieng to smyten of his hed.

Aristobolus, who had been sent prisoner to Rome by Pompey, was released by Cesar, and hoped to regain his kingdom.

Thus kyng Iuba rather ches to deic
 Than lenger lyue in subieccioun
 Vndir Cesar; he loued so weel Pompeye. 2740
 ¶ Than next to Bochas, as maad is mencion,
 Cam Aristobolus, with face & look cast down,
 Which was to* Roome, afforn as I haue told,
 Sent bi Pompeye to* be kept in hold. 2744

[Aristobolus.]

Which aftir was delyuered fro prisoun
 Bi help of Cesar in ful hasti wise,
 Stondyng in hope of his regioun 2748
 To be restored vnto the fraunchise,
 Wher Hircanus, as ye haue herd the guise,*
 Preferred was, to his gret foorth[er]yng,
 Bi Pompeie of Iewes crowned kyng.

Unfortunately he fell into the hands of a captain who had been in Pompey's service and who killed him by poisoning.

Which Aristobolus hopeth to recure, 2752
 Caste menys ther to regne ageyn,
 Wrouhte theron, dide his besi cure,
 Whos hasti labour was but spent in veyn.
 Fill in the handis of a proud capteyn 2756
 Which that whilom was longyng to Pompeie;
 And he with poisoun vnwarli made hym deye.

[How the last Scipioun Consulere of Rome for he
 not list to lyue in seruage of Iulyus roff himsilt
 to þe hert.]¹

Next appeared the last of the Scipios, who was defecated together with Iuba by Cesar.

NEXT cam the laste worthi Scipioun,
 Which aftir Pompeie was maad consuleer, 2760
 Witb whom Iuba was at discencioun
 For veryng purpre, as it was told wol er,

2743. to] in B. 2744. to] for to B. 2748. the] his H.
 2749. the guise] deuse B. 2750. to] in H. 2762. purpull H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 135 recto.

And aftirward fill in ful gret[e] feer,
Whan Cesar hadde withynne Libie-lond 2764
Outraied [hem] bothe with strong & myhti hond.

Wherbi Sipioun gan fallen in despair, [p. 331] Despairing, he
Loste his cheer, as man disconsolat, took ship to
With thre Romeyns gan make his repair, — 2768 Spain, but was
Damasippus, Plectorie and Torquat, — Africa,
Goyng to shipe, the tyme infortunat,
Toward Spayne; but tempest gan hem dryue,
That thei in Affrik vnwarli dede aryue. 2772

Scipioun seeyng this woful caas sodeyne, where Sicius, a
How he was brouht vnwarli to myscheeff; pirate friendly
For Scicius, a myhti strong capteyn, to Cesar, fell
Be yng a pirat and off the se a theeff, 2776 on him,
Which is a name of ful gret repreeff, —
The same pirat, longyng to Cesar,
Fill on Scipioun or that he was war,

Be yng in purpos take hym prisoneer 2780 intending to
Withynne his shipp toforn his arryuail; take him
For which, alas, dulle gan his cheer, prisoner.
His contenance appallen & eek faille. In his extrem-
To fynde counfort no man coude hym counsaile, 2784 ity he pulled
Pullid out a suerd, whan he myht nat a-sterete, out a sword
And roof hym silff[e] euene to* the herte. and thrust it
into his heart.

This was the eende of laste Scipioun: He, too, died
Leuere he hadde at myscheef for to deie 2788 rather than be
Than vndir Cesar lyn fetrid in prisoun a captive of
Or to his lordshipe in any wise obeye. Cesar.
¶ To Bochas next hym cam Pompeye, After him,
Sone and heir to gret[e] Pompeius, Pompey, son
Contraire also to Cesar Iulius, 2792 and heir of
before Bochas.

Hadde brethren & sistren mo than oon, He and his
And many another of ther alliaunce. brothers and
And of assent thei cast hem euerichon, 2796 sisters deter-
Ther fadris deth hauyng in remembraunce, mined to be
Vpon Cesar to take therof vengauce, revenged on
Eek upon Tholomee, which bi collusioun Cesar and
Slouh ther fadir bi ful fals tresoun. 2800 Ptolemy.

2775. Sicyus H, Sicius R 3, P.

2783. H inserts the word purpose before contenance.

2786. to] thoruh B, H 5.

- Pompey fought with Cæsar in Spain, and, put to flight, The eldest brothir callid eek Pompeye,
 Beyng in Spaigne with ful gret apparail,
 Cast hym of newe Cesar to werreye
 And his peple prondli to assaille.* 2804
 And, as I fynde, ther was a gret bataille,
 In which Pompeie, the eldest sone of thre,
 Bi Iulius men constreyned was to flee.
- and not knowing what to do, hid in a cave and was slain. He fond no socour nor receit hym to saue, 2808
 Off his lyff, he, stondyng in gret dreed,
 Knowyng no reffut, fledde into a caue,
 Tescape* awey knew no bettir reed,
 Wher he was slayn; to Cesar brouht his hed, 2812
 Sent foorth in scorn anon to Hispalee,
 Which in Spaigne is a ful gret cite.
- Finally, all of Pompey's kindred were brought to destruction by Cæsar, whose renown increased. Thus bi processe al hooli the kynreede
 Of Pompeius, for short conclusioun, 2816
 Bi Cesar wern & bi his men in deede
 Withoute mercy brouht to destruccioun.
 Thus gan encrece the fame & the renoun
 Of Iulius conquest on se & eek on londe, 2820
 Whos mortal suerd ther myht[e] non withstonde.
- His power had been proved in Lybia, Spain, Italy, Germany, Lombardy and France. First in Libie, Spaigne and eek Itaille*
 Thexperience of his roial puissaunce,
 In Germanye bi many strong bataille, 2824
 His power preved, in Lumbardie & in Fraunce.
 Brouhte alle thes kyngdames vndir thobeissaunce
 Of [the] Romeyns: peised al this thyng & seyn
 Touchyng his guerdoun, his labour was in veyn. 2828
- Returning to Rome, he put an end to the civil war and received the triumph, Toward Roome makyng his repair,
 Of hym appesed cyuyll discenciouns,
 Of throne imperial clymyng on the stair;
 For the conquest of threttene regiouns, 2832
 Of the tryumphe requered the guerdouns,
 Which to recure his force [he] hath applied,
 Al-be the Senat his request hath denied.

2804. tassaille B. 2811. To scape B.

2822. in Itaille B.

2825. Lumbardie] Germanye H, R 3, H 5 — in Lumbardie &]
 ful often tyme J, ful oft times P.2827. al] as H. 2832. xiiij^e B.

2834. recure] replye H.

2835. request] conquest H.

And his name mor to magnefie, 2836 and, hastening
 To shewe the glorie* of his hih noblesse, to the Capitol,
 To the Capitoile faste he gan hym hie, issued his de-
 As emperour his doomys ther to dresse. crees as em-
 That day began with ioie & gret gladnesse; 2840 peror. That
 The eue nothyng accordyng* with the morwe: day began with
 The entre glad; the eende trouble & sorwe. joy but ended
 in sorrow.

Calipurnia, which that was his wiff, One night
 Hadde a drem the same niht afforn, 2844 Calpurnia
 Toknis shewed of the funeral striff, dreamt that
 How that hir lord was likli to be lorn her lord would
 Be conspiracy compassed & Isworn, die if he went
 Yiff he that day, withoute auisement, 2848 to the Capitol
 In the Capitoile sat in iugement. the next day.

She drempte, alas, as she lay & sleep[te], [p. 332] She dremt
 That hir lord, thoruh girt *with* many a wounde, that her
 Lay in hir lappe, & she the bodi kepte 2852 lord, pierced
 Of womanheed, lik as she was bounde. with many
 But, o alas, to soth hir drem was founde! wounds, lay in
 The nexte morwe, no lenger maad delay, her lap. Alas,
 Of his parodie was the fatal day. 2856 her dream came
 true!

A poore man callid Tongilius, A poor man
 Which secreli the tresoun dede espie, named Tongilius
 Leet write a lettre, took it Iulius, knew the
 The caas declaryng of the conspiracie, 2860 treason, but
 Which to reede Cesar list nat applie. Cæsar
 But, o alas! ambitious negligence neglected his
 Caused his mordre bi vnwar violence. warning,

Cesar sitting myd the consistorie, 2864 and, sitting in
 In his estat[e] most imperiall, the midst of
 Aftir many conquest & victorie, the consistory,
 Fortune awaityng to yuen hym a fall, was murdered
 With boidekenys, Percyng as an all, 2868 with bodkins.
 He moordred was, with many mortal wounde.
 Loo, how fals trust in worldli pompe is founde!

2837. gloire B, J.

2841. accordyng nothyng B.

2844. toforn H, R 3, befor J.

2868. bodkyns H, bodkynes R 3, boidekynes J, Boydkynnys

H 5, Bodkins P.

2869. many a H.

Lenvoye.

No tragedie is
more woeful
than the fall
of Cæsar.

THORUH al this book[e] rad ech tragedie,
Afforn rehersed & put in remembrance, 2872
Is non mor woeful to my fantasie,
Than is the fall of Cesar in substaunce,
Which in his hiest imperial puissaunce
Was, whil he wende haue be most glorious, 2876
Moordred at Roome of Brutus Cassius.

He brought all
countries to
subjection, and
yet he was
murdered at
Rome by
Brutus Cassius.

This marcial prince ridyng thoruh Lumbardie,
Ech contre yolde & brouht to obeissaunce;
Passyng the Alpies rood thoruh Germanye, 2880
To subiaccioun brouht the rewme of Fraunce,
Gat Brutis Albioun bi long contynuaunce:
To lustris passed, this manli Iulius
Moordred at Roome bi Brutus Cassius. 2884

The conspiracy
was hatched by
the Senators,
in spite of
whom he had
celebrated his
triumph.

Among the Senat was the conspiracye
Alle of assent & of oon accordaunce, —
Whos tryumphe thei proudli gan denye;
But maugre them was kept thobseruaunce, 2888
His chaar of gold with steedis of plesaunce
Conveied thoruh Roome, this prince [most] pompous,
The moordre folwyng bi Brutus Cassius.

Reckon up his
conquests and
his chivalry,
and compare
them with
worldly vari-
ance!

Rekne his conquest, rekne up his cheualrie 2892
With a countirpeis of worldli variaunce:
Fortunys chaungis for his purpartie; —
Weie al to-gidre, cast hem in ballaunce,
Set to of Cesar the myscheeuable chaunce, 2896
With his parodie sodeyn & envious, —
Moordred at Roome bi Brutus Cassius.

Mars and
Jupiter united
to enhance his
noblesse, yet
he was mur-
dered at Rome
by Brutus
Cassius.

Bookis alle and cronicles speciefe,
Bi influence of heuenli purueiaunce, 2900
Mars and Iubiter ther fauour did applie
With glade aspectis his noblesse to enhance:*
Mars gaf hym kniithod, Iubiter gouernaunce,
Among princis hold oon the moste famous, — 2904
Moordred at Roome bi Brutus Cassius.

2896. myscheuous H.
2902. tenhaunce B, J, R 3.

Behold of Alisaundre the grete monarchie,
 Which al the world had vndir obeissaunce,
 Prowesse of Ector medlid *witb* gentrie, 2908
 Of Achilles malencolik vengauce, —
 Rekne of echon the quaueryng assuraunce,
 Among remembring the fyn of Iulius,
 Moordred at Roome bi Brutus Cassius. 2912

Behold the monarchy of Alexander, the chivalry of Hector, Achilles' vengeance, and the end of Cæsar! Consider of each one the trembling security!

Princis considreth, in marcial policie
 Is nouthur trust[e], feith nor assuraunce:
 Al stant in chaung with twynclyng of an eye.
 Vp toward heuene set your attendaunce, 2916
 The world vnseur & al worldli plesaunce;
 Lordship abit nat, record on Iulius
 Moordred at Roome bi Brutus Cassius.

Princes, there is no trust in martial policy: all may change in the twinkling of an eye; record on Julius, who was murdered at Rome by Brutus Cassius.

[How Octavian / succeded next and how the
 mordres of Iulius / deied at mischeff.]¹

A FFTIR the moordre of his manli man, 2920
 This noble prince, this famous* emperour,
 His worthi newew callid Octouyan
 To regne in Roome was next his successour.
 Which dide his deueer bi dilligent labour 2924
 To punshe all tho, of nature as he ouhte,
 Bi rihtful doom, that the moordre wrouhte.

After Cæsar's death, his nephew Octavian succeeded to the empire, and his endeavour was to punish all those who had been guilty of the murder.

Cheeff conspiratour was Brutus Cassius,
 Which of this moordre made [al] the ordynaunce. 2928
 Anothir Brut, surnamyd Decius,
 Was oon also conspiryng the vengauce
 Wrouht on Cesar; he aftir slayn in Fraunce. 2931
 Heer men may seen, what coostis that men weende,
 How moordre alwey requereth an euel eende.

Brutus Cassius was chief conspirator, Decius another, slain afterwards in France. Murder always demands an evil end.

Withyne the space almost of thre yeer [p. 333]
 Destroied wern al the conspiratours
 Be sodeyn deth; & summe stood in daungeer 2936
 To be banshed or exiled as tretours.
 And as it is cronicled bi auctours,
 Space of thre yeer, reknid oon bi oon,
 Deide at myscheff the moorderis euerichon. 2940

Within three years all the conspirators were either destroyed or exiled.

2921. famous] manli B.
 2922. Octavian P. 2926. the] he H.
 2937. banyssh H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 136 recto.

It is a sad thing to murder a prince. God will take vengeance. Yet there is but little security in high estate.

To moordre a prince, it is a pitous thyng,
 God of his riht wil take therof vengauce;
 Namli an emperour, so famous in ech thyng,
 Which al the world[e] hadde in gouernaunce. 2944
 Rekne his conquest digne off remembraunce,
 Al peised in oon, Bochas ber[c]th witesse,
 In hih estat is litil sekirnesse.

[How Tullius was too tymes exiled and atte last/
 slayn by Pompylyus.]¹

My author next made ready to write about Tullius, complaining that his barren stile was inadequate to describe the life of so noble a rhetorician.

MYN auctour heer writ no long processe, 2948
 Of Iulius deth compleynyng but a while;
 To write of Tullie in hast he gan hym dresse,
 Compendiousli his liff for to compile,
 Compleynyng first, seith his bareyn stile 2952
 Is insufficient to write, as men may seen,
 Of so notable a rethoricien.

Prince of eloquence, he gathered up the flowers on Mt. Parnassus and was crowned with laurel by the nine Muses.

Laumpe and lanterne of Romeyn oratours,
 Among hem callid prince of elloquence, 2956
 On Pernaço he gadred up the flours,
 This rethoricien most of excellence.
 Whos meritis treuli to recompence,
 The Muses nyne, me thouhte, as I took heed, 2960
 A crowne of laureer set upon his hed.

Bochas hung his head and thought he had so little skill and language, that if he laboured all his life he could not properly describe Tully's merits.

Bochas astoned, gan of hymself conclude,
 His look abashed, dul of his corage, 2964
 Thouhte his termys & resouns wer to rude,
 That he lakked kunnyng & langage,
 Wherebi he sholde to his auantage,
 Thouh he laboured writyng al his lyue,
 Of Tullius the meritis to descryue. 2968

But he remembered that although sometimes the wind drives a cloud across the sun, it does not lessen its light, and that his dull writing would not eclipse the brightness of Tullius.

Wherof supprised, he kauhte a fantasie,
 Withynne hymself remembryng anon riht,
 Thouh it so falle sumtyme a cloudi skie 2972
 Be chacid with wynd affor the sunne briht,
 Yit in effect it lasseth nat his liht;
 So Bochas dempte that his dul writyng
 Eclipsed nat of Tullius the shynyng.

2953. sufficient H. 2958. excellence] Elloquence H.
 2960. me] om. H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 136 recto.

- With rud language a man may weel reporte 2976
 The laude off tryumphes & conquestis merueilous,
 Which thyng remembryng gretli gan comforte
 The herte of Bochas; & to hymself spak thus:
 "Too colours seyn that be contrarious, 2980
 As whiht and blak; it may bee non othir,
 Ech in his kynde sheweth mor for othir.
- In Phebus presence sterris lese her liht;
 Cleer at mydday appeereth nat Lucyne;
 The fame of Tullye whilom shon so briht,
 Prince of fair speche, fadir of that doctrine,
 Whos brihte bemys into this hour doth shyne:
 Sothli," quod Bochas, "of whom whan I endite 2988
 Myn hand I feele quakyng whan I write.
- But for to yiue folk occasioun,
 Which in rethorik haue mor* experience
 Than haue I, & mor inspeccioun 2992
 In the colours and craff[t] of elloquence,—
 Them texcite to do ther dilligence,
 Onto my wrytyng whan thei may attende,
 Of compassioun my rudnesse to amende." 2996
- Vnto hymself[e] hauyng this langage,
 Bochas to write gan his penne dresse,
 Vndir support afforced his corage
 To remembre the excellent noblesse 3000
 Of this oratour, which *with* the suetnesse
 Of his ditees, abrod as thei haue shynd,
 Hath al this world most cleerli enlumyned.
- This Tullius, this singuler famous* man,
 First to remembre of his natyuyte,
 Born at Aprinas, a cite of Tuscan,
 Of blood roial descendid, who list see.
 Grekissh bookis of old antiquite, 3008
 Maad of rethorik and in ther vulgar songe,
 He translaticid into Latyn tunge.
- In tendre youthe his contre he forsook
 And fro Tuscan his passage he gan dresse;
 Toward Roome the riht[e] weie he took, 3012
 Entryng þe cite, the renommed noblesse

It comforted him to think that all manner of things can be told in unadorned language, and that colours shew best by contrast.

Nevertheless he said, "I feel my hand tremble when I write about him.

2988

"However, people who are more skilled than I will have opportunity to amend my rudeness out of compassion."

2996

After he had said this to himself he began to write.

3000

Tullius was born at Arpinum in Tuscany. He was of royal descent, and at first translated old Greek books into Latin.

3008

In his youth he went to Rome; and his fame spread abroad like a sun.

3012

2983. liht] siht H.

2991. mor] non B. 3004. famous singuler B.

3005. of his] his famous H.

Hid in his persone shewed the brihtnesse
Of dyuers vertues, tyme whil he abood, 3016
That lik a sonne his fame spradde abrod.

He was made a
citizen for his
virtues and
chosen consul
in the time of
Catiline.

For his vertues made a citeseyn, [p. 334]
The goode report of hym shon so cleer,
Lik as he hadde be born a Romeyn, 3020
In ther fauour his name was so entieer.
Among hem chose for a consuleer, —
Ageyn the cite, tyme of his consulat,
Whan Catalyne was with hem at debat. 3024

Catiline, cruel
and full of
wrath, was
always busy to
injure Rome;

Bi the prudence of this Tullius
And his manhod, reknid bothe Ifeere, —
Catelyna, most cruel and irous,
Froward of port & froward of his cheere, 3028
Besi euere to fynde out the maneere,
How he myhte be any tokne or signe
Ageyn the cite couertli maligne.

and 689 years
after the foun-
dation of the
city he con-
spired with
others against
its franchises
and freedoms,

Sixe hundrid yeer, fourscore told & nyne, 3032
Reknid of Roome fro the fundacioun,
This cruel tiraunt, this proude Catalyne,
Made with othir a coniuracioun
Ageyn fraunchises & fredam of the touen. 3036
First discurid, as bookis telle can,
In the parties & boundes of Tuscan.

purposing to
bring Rome
to ruin.

The purpos hooly of this Catalyne,
Imagyned on fals[e] couetise, 3040
Was to brynge Roome vnto ruyne.
And therupon in many sondri wise
Fond out weies, menys gan deuisse,
To his entent bi dilligent labour 3044
In the cite gan gete hym gret fauour.

Tully was told
about the con-
spiracy, and by
his prudence
and the help of
Antony it was
broken and
withdrawn.

But fynali his coniuracioun
Discured was bi oon Quintius,
Which was afforn[e] fals vnto the touen. 3048
Tolde al the caas vnto Tullius,
Bi whos prudence & werkyng merveilous,
Bi help of Antoyne, that was his felawe,
The coniuracioun was broken & withdrawe. 3052

3016. whil] whan H.

3027. Catilina P — most Irous H.

3036. Ageyn] geyn H.

- Bi witt of Tullie al the coniuatours
Espied wern and brouht onto myschaunce,
Ther namys rad tofor the senatours,
Of ther falsheed told al the gouernaunce,
Manli ordeyned thoruh his purueiaunce. 3056
With al his peeple, as maad is menciouⁿ,
Catilyna departid fro the toun.
- With Antonye* the said[e] Catalyne 3060
Beside Pistoie hadde a gret bataile.
Slayn in the feeld; he myht[e] nat declyne,
For he abood whan the feeld gan faille.
Power of oon litil may auaille, 3064
Namli whan falsheed, of malis & of pride
Ageyn[es] trouthe dar the bront abide.
- Ther was another callid Lentulus
Of his felawes, that namyd was Fabyne; 3068
The thridde of hem eek callid Cetegus, —
Alle assentid & sworn to Catalyne,
Stranglid in prisoun, at myscheef dide fyne.
Cause Tullius dide execuciouⁿ, 3072
Tullyane was callid the prisoun.
- Thus koude he punshe tretours of the toun,
Outraie ther enmyes, of manhod & prudence;
Callid of ther cite governour & patroun, 3076
Sent from aboue to been ther diffence,
Ther champioun, most digne of reuerence,
Chose of ther goddis ther cite for to guie
Bi too prerogatyues: knihthod & polycie.* 3080
- Lik a sunne he dide hem enlumyne
Bi hih prowessse of knihtli excellence;
And thoruh the world his bemys dede shyne
Of his rethorik & his elloquence, 3084
In which he hadde so gret experience.
Bi circumstaunces that nothyng dede lakke,
He transcendid Polityus & Grakke.
- Of oratours it is put in memorie, 3088
This Tullius, thoruh his hih renoun,
Of all echon the honour & the glorie
Was youe to hym, as maad is menciouⁿ:

Through his ability all the conspirators were punished. Catiline left Rome

and was slain in a battle with Antony near Pistoia.

Three of his companions were strangled in prison; and the prison was afterwards called Tullian, after Tully, who had defeated the plot.

Thus he punished traitors to Rome. He was called patron and governor of the city.

He illumined the Romans like a sun; and the beams of his rhetoric and eloquence shone through the world.

He surpassed all orators and won the golden triumph of the House of Fame.

3060. Antonye B. 3063. faille] falle H. 3073. Tullianum P.
3076. ther] þe H, the R 3. 3080. polycie] clergie B, J.
3087. Plotyus H, R 3, Plocius J, Plotius P.

- Surmountid all; & in conclusioun, 3092
 The goldene trumphe of the Hous of Fame
 Thoruh al the world[e] bleuh abrod his name.
- He knew the secrets of philosophy and studied in Athens, where he profited in all sciences. He knew secretis of philosophie,
 Cam to Athenys* to scoole for doctryne, 3096
 Wher he profited so gretli in clergie
 In al sciences heuenli and dyuyne,
 That he was callid, as auctours deternyne,
 Among Romeyns, of verray dieu[e] riht, 3100
 Of elloquence the lanterne & the liht.
- He pleaded two great causes in Rome before the senators. It is remembred among oratours, [p. 335]
 How Tullius pleted causes tweyne
 In the Romeyn court affor the senatours, 3104
 The cause defendyng be langage souereyne
 Of too accusid geyn hem that dede pleyne
 On ther defaultis, them sauynge fro myscheef,
 The court escapyng fro daunger & repreff. 3108
- saving two accused, and spoke such beautiful Latin and dealt so wisely with his material that no man could deny what he said. Thes causes tweyne he pleted in Latyn,
 With so excellent flouryng fair langage,
 With suich resouns concluded at the fyn,
 That he be wisdam kauhte the auantage 3112
 In his mateeres *witb* al the surplusage
 That myhte auaille onto his partie:
 What he saide ther koude no man denie.
- In Greece his reputation and authority were so great that he was compared to Plato, upon whose infant lips bees laid honey, a sign that he would be the source and well of rhetoric. Yet Tully was his equal. Among Grekis [at] Athenys the cite 3116
 He was so gret of reputacioun,
 So famous holde of auctori[t]e,
 To be comparid bi ther oppynyoun
 To the philisophre that callid was Platoun, 3120
 To whos cradel bees dede abraide
 And hony soote thei on his lippes laide.
 A pronostik[e], lik as bookis tell,
 Plato sholde bi famous excellence, 3124
 Of rethorik be verray sours & well,
 For his langage, merour off elloquence.
 Yit the Grekis recorden in sentence,
 How Tullius in parti and in all 3128
 Was onto Plato in rethorik egall.

3096. to Athenys] Tathenys B, H 5.

3107. them] om. H. 3109. Thes] The H. 3116. at] om. H.

- Thoruh his langage this saide Tullius
 Reconsiled bi his soote orisouns
 To the lordshipe & grace of Iulius,
 Princes, kynges of dyuers regiouns,
 That suspect stood bi accusaciouns,
 Because thei dide Iulius disobeie,
 Wer enclnyed with Romeyns to Pompeie. 3132
Through his orations he reconciled the princes and kynges of many regions to the lordship of Iulius.
- He coude appese bi his prudent langage
 Folkis that stode at discencioun;
 Bi crafft he hadde a special auantage,
 Fauour synguleer in pronunciacioun,
 In his demenyng gret prudence & resoun:
 For the pronouncyng of maters in substaunce,
 His thank resceyueh bi cheer & contaunce. 3140
He could soften people who were at enmity with one another,
- To a glad mateer longeth a glad cheer,
 Men trete of wisdam with woordes of sadnesse,
 Pleyntes requeere, aftir the mateer,
 Greuous or mortal, a cheer of heuynesse,
 Lik as the cause outhur the processe
 Yiueth occasioun to hyndren or to speede, —
 The doctryne in Tullius men may reede. 3144
and knew well how to adapt his expression to the matter of which he treated.
- The name of Tulie was kouth in many place;
 His elloquence in eueri lond was ryff;
 His langage made hym stonde in grace
 And be preferrid duryng al his lyff.
 Maried he was, and hadde a riht fair wiff,
 Childre manye, seruauantis yonge & old;
 And, as I fynde, he heeld a good houshold. 3152
His reputation was known in every land. He had a wife, who was right fair, and many children and servants.
- De Officijs he wrot bookis thre,
 De Amicitia, I fynde how he wrot oon,
 Of Age another, notable for to see;
 Of moral vertu thei tretede euerichon.
 [And] as Vincent wrot ful yore agon
 In his Merour callid Historiall,
 Noubre of his bookis be ther remembrid all. 3160
He wrote three books *de Officiis*, *Cato Major* (Vincent described all his writings in his *Speculum Historiale*),

3150. in] of H.

3151. Tullyus H.

3154. be] he H.

- the Dream of Scipio, two books of divination, on agriculture, vainglory, *de Republica*, twelve books of orations and many moral sayings.
- He wrot also the Drem of Scipioun,
Of Rethoriques compiled bookis tweyne,
And tweyne he wrot of dyuynacioun;
Of tilthe of lond to write he dede his peyne, 3168
A large book of glorie that is veyne,
De Re publica; & as he seith hymselfe,
Of his Orisouns he wrot bookis tuelue.
- But in spite of all, he was banished from Rome
- And of his dictes that callid be morall 3172
Is remembred notabli in deede
In the said Merour Historiall.
And yit this saide Tullius, as I reede,
Mid his worshepes stood alwey in dreede 3176
Of Fortune; for in conclusioun,
He be envie was ban[y]shed Roome toun.
- to Campania; and there, at the house of a friend,
- Beyng in exil, this famous Tullius,
In Campanya at Atyne the cite 3180
Resceyued he was of oon Plancius,
A man that tyme of gret auctorite.
And whil that he abood in that contre,
Slepyng aniht, the book makþ mencioniun, 3184
How that he hadde a wonder visioun.
- he had a wonderful dream of how he met Gaius Marius in a desert. Marius inquired the cause of his trouble, and on learning what it was
- He thouhte thus, as he lay slepyng: [p. 336]
In a desert and a gret wildirnesse
Fyndyng no path, but to & fro erryng, 3188
How he mette, clad in gret richesse,
Gaius Marrius, a prince of hih* noblesse,
Axyng Tulli with sad contenaunce,
What was cheef ground & cause of his greuaunce. 3192
- assigned a sergeant to convey him in all haste to his sepulture, where Tullius should receive tidings of his recall to Rome.
- Whan Tullius hadde hym the cause told
Of his disese & his mortal wo,
Marrius with his hand set on hym hold,
To a sergaunt assigned hym riht tho, 3196
And in al haste bad he sholde go,
To conveie hym doon his besi cure
In al haste possible to his sepulture,

3171. Orisouns] Oracions P.

3172. dictes] ditees H, dictes H, dities P, dites R 3, H 5.

3175. this] þe H.

3176. worshipp H. 3180. Ative H.

3181. Plantius P.

3190. hih] gret B, J, H 5, R 3, great P — Cayus P.

3198. doon his besi] doum bi his H.

- Wher he sholde haue tidynge of plesaunce 3200
 Of his repeer into Roome toun,
 Been alleggid off his old greuance.
 This was the eende of his auisseoun.
 The nexte morwe, as maad is menciou, 3204
 Ther was holde, to Tullius gret auail,
 Tofor Iubiter in Roome a gret counsail
 Withyne the temple bilt bi Marrius:
 The senatours accorded wer certeyn 3208
 To reconcile this prudent Tullius,
 Out of his exil to calle hym hom ageyn.
 Aftir resceyued as lord & souereyn
 Of elloquence, bassent of the Senat, 3212
 Fulli restored vnto his first estat.
 This thing was doon whan that in Roome toun
 The striff was grettest tween Cesar & Pompeie;
 And for Tullius drouh hym to Catoun, 3216
 With Pompeius Cesar to werreie
 And of Iulius the parti disobeie,
 Out of Roome Tullius dide hym hie,
 Fledde with Pompeie into Thesalie. 3220
 Cesar aftir of his fre mocioun,
 Whan that he stood hiest in his glorie,
 Hym reconciled ageyn to* Roome toun,
 Vpon Pompeie accomplishd the victorie. 3224
 But Iulius slayn in the consistorie
 Bi sexti senatours beyng of assent,
 Tullius ageyn was into exil sent.
 And in a cite callid Faryman 3228
 Tullius his exil dide endure;
 For Antonyus was to hym enmy than,
 Because that he, parcas of auenture,
 Compiled hadde an invectiff scripture 3232
 Ageyn Antoyne, rehersyng al the cas
 Of his defautis & of Cleopatras.
 Thus of envie and [of] mortal hatreede,
 His deth compassed bi Antonyus, 3236
 And aftirward execut in deede
 Bi procuryng of oon Pompillius; —

The next day a council was held in Rome in the temple built by Marius, and shortly afterwards Tully was restored to his former estate.

This was done during the struggle between Cæsar and Pompey; and although Tullius had fled with Pompey to Thessaly,

Cæsar became reconciled with him.

After Cæsar's death he was again exiled; and Antony hated him and compassed his murder because he had exposed his relations, with Cleopatra.

Finally one Popilius went to Campania on the authority of Antony

3201. into] vn to H.

3223. to] into B. 2224, 25 are transposed, but corrected H.

3232. invectiff] Inuentive H, Inuentif J.

- Gat a commyssioun, the stori tellith thus,
 Of fals malice, & foorth anon wente he 3240
 Into Gayete of Campaigne* a cite.
- and slew
 Tullius, al-
 though he had
 once saved him
 from the
 gallows.
 And bi the vertu of his commyssioun,
 Takyng of Antoyne licence & liberte,
 Cheeff rethoricien that euer was in the touun, 3244
 Among Romeyns to worshep the cite,
 Was slayn, alas, of hate and enmyte
 Bi Pompilius, roote of al falsheed, —
 Proffryng hymselff to smyten of his hed. 3248
- Whoever saves
 a thief, when
 the rope is
 tied about his
 neck, will have
 an evil reward.
 Tullius afforn[c] hadde been his diffence
 Fro the galwes, & his deth eek let,
 Which hadde disserued for his gret offence
 To haue been hangid upon an hih gibet. 3252
 Who saueth a thief whan the rop is knet
 Aboute his nekke, as olde clerkis write,
 With sum fals tourn the bribour wil hym quite.
- Experience
 shews that
 a thief
 will always be
 ungrateful.
 Loo, heer the vice of ingratitude, 3256
 Bexperience brouht fulli to a preeff,
 Who in his herte tresoun doth include,
 Cast for good wil to do a man repreeff.
 What is the guerdoun for to saue a theeff? 3260
 Whan he is scapid, looke, ye shal fynde
 Of his nature euere to be vnkynde.
- This odious
 traitor Popilius
 smote off Tully's
 right hand
 after he was
 dead;
 This Popilius, tretour most odible,
 To shewe hymselff fals, cruel and vengable, 3264
 Toward Tullie dide a thyng horrible:
 Whan he was ded, this bribour most coupable,
 Smet of his riht hand, to heere abhomynable,
 With which[e] hond, he lyuyng, on hym took 3268
 To write of vertues many [a] famous book.
- and his hand
 and head were
 afterwards set
 up on a stake,
 until the wind
 and weather
 wasted them.
 The hand, the hed of noble Tullius,— [p. 337]
 Which eueri man ouht of riht compleyne, —
 Wer take and brouht[e] bi Popilius, 3272
 Vpon a stake set up bothe tweyne,
 Ther tabide, wher it dide shyne or reyne,
 With wynd & wedir, til thei wer deffied,
 In tokne al fauour was to hym denied. 3276

3239. a] om. H.

3241. Gayete] Gaire J, Caiatte P — Compaigne B, J, compay-
 gne H 5, Campayne H, Campayne R 3, Champayne P.

3255. bribour] labour H.

3263. Popilius] Pompelyne H, Pompilyn R 3.

3270. R begins again with this line.

¶ A chapitle ageyn [Iangelers and]¹ diffamers of
Rethorique.

BOCHAS compleynng in his studie allone

The deth of Tullie and the woful fall,
Gruchching in herte made a pitous mone,
The folk rebukyng in especial,
Which of nature be boistous & rurall,
And hardi been (for thei no kunnyng haue)
Craft of rethorik to hyndren and depraue.

Bochas, com-
plaining the
death of Tully,
rebuked those
people who are
rude and
tumultuous by
nature and bold
(for they have
no skill them-
selves) to decry
the art of
rhetoric.

3280

Clerkis olde dide gretli magnefie
This noble science, that wer expert & wis,
Callid it part of philosophie,
And saide also in ther prudent auys,
Ther be thre partes, as tresours of gret pris,
Compiled in bookis & of old prouided,
Into which philosophie is deuyded.

In the old
days scholars
called it a
branch of
philosophy.

3284

There are
three branches
of philosophy:

3288

The firste of hem callid is morall,
Which directeth a man to goode thewes;
And the secounde, callid naturall,
Tellith the kynde of goode men & shrewes;
And the thridde, rac[i]ounal, weel shewes
What men shal uoide & what thing vndirfonge,
And to that parti rethorik doth longe.

moral, natural
and rational,
and to
rational
rhetoric
belongs.

3292

3296

Bi Tullius, as auctours determyne,
Of his persone rehersyng in substaunce,
Translatid was fro Greek into Latyne
Crafft of rethorik; and for the habundaunce
Of elloquence stuffed with plesaunce,
All oratours remembrid, hym to-fore
Was ther non lik, nor aftir hym yit bore.

The art of
rhetoric was
transferred
from Greece to
Rome by
Tullius. No
orator like him
was ever born.

3300

3304

Bochas also seith in his writingis
And preueth weel be resoun in sentence,
To an oratour longeth foure thingis:
First naturel wit, practik with science,
Vertuous lyff, cheef ground of elloquence,
Of port and maner that he be tretable;
Thes menys had, myn auctour halt hym able.

Bochas says
that an orator
must haue
natural wit,
broad know-
ledge, a virtuous
life and affa-
bility.

3308

3280. The] tho H. 3283. and] or H.

3288. gret] om. H. 3290. deuyded] prouyded R.

3307. longeth] longe R.

¹ Supplied from MS. J. leaf 139 recto.

Bochas also demonstrates that every notable rhetorician must have five armours, which he calls the five banners of eloquence.

In his writyng and in his scriptures 3312
 Bochas weel preueth, if mut needis been,
 How that of riht ther longe fyue armures
 To eueri notable rethoricien,
 Set heer in ordre, who that list hem seen, 3316
 Which he callith, rehersyng in sentence,
 The fyue baneeres longyng to elloquence.

The first is Invention,

The firste off hem callid Inuencioun,
 Bi which a man doth in his herte fynde 3320
 A sikir grounde foundid on resoun,
 With circumstaunces, that nouht be left behynde,
 Fro poynt to poynt enprentid in his mynde
 Touchyng the mateer, the substauce & þe grete, 3324
 Of which he caste notabli tentrete.

the second Disposition, which helps us avoid digressions;

Another armure, in ordre the secoude,
 Of riht is callid Disposioun,
 As of a mateer whan the ground is founde, 3328
 That eueri thyng bi iust dyuysioun
 Be void of al foreyn digressioun,
 So disposid touchyng tyme & space,
 Fro superfluite keepe his dewe place. 3332

the third is Elocution, the art of effective expression;

The thridde armure namyd in sentence
 Is Ellocucioun, with woordes many or fewe,
 Materes conceyued bi iust conuenyence,
 Disposid in ordre couenably* to shewe, — 3336
 Lik a keruer that first doth tymbir hewe,
 Squier* & compas cast fetures & visage,
 With keruyng tool makth [up] a fair image.

the fourth is Pronunciation, which is joined to execution,

Pronunciacioun is the fourth armure, 3340
 Necessarie to eueri oratour,
 In such caas whan craft onto nature
 Ioynded is bi dilligent labour
 With executioun, and that ther be fauour 3344
 In declaryng, with eueri circumstaunce,
 Folwyng the mateer in cheer & contenance.

whereby the orator conforms his mien and gestures to his matter;

An heuy mateer requereth an heuy cheer; [p. 338]
 To a glad mateer longeth weel gladnesse; 3348
 Men in pronuncyng mut folwe the mateer, —
 Old oratours kan bern herof witsesse, —

3336. couenable B, R 3.
 3342. craft is repeated R.
 3350. herof] ther off R.

3338. Squiers B.
 3339. toolis H.

- A furious compleynt vttrid in distresse:
 This was the maner, as poetis do descryue, 3352
 In his tragedies whan Senec was alyue.
- The fiffte armure callid Remembraunce,
 With quik memorie* be prouidence to see,
 So auisili to grose up in substaunce 3356
 Hooli his mateeris, that nouht forgetyn be,
 Liste foryetilnesse dirke nat the liberte
 Of cleer report, ech thing hadde in mynde,
 That in pronouncyng nothing be left behynde. 3360
- Afforn prouided, so that foryetilnesse
 Be non hyndrere to inuencioun,
 And in procedyng no foreyn reklesnesse
 Trouble nat the ordre of disposicioun. 3364
 And for tacomplisshe al up with resoun,
 That pronouncyng be cleer[e] remembraunce
 Be weel fauoured with cheer & contenance.
- Thes said[e] thynges be inli necessarie 3368
 To euery prudent notable oratour,
 Nat to hasti nor ouer long to tarie,
 But to conveie his processe be mesour;
 In cheer accordyng stant al the fauour: 3372
 For in pronouncyng, who lakketh cheer or* face,
 Of Tullius scoole stant ferr out of grace.
- ¶ Al erthli beestis be muet of nature,
 Sauf onli man, which haueth auauntage 3376
 Bi a prerogatiff about ech creature
 To vttrre his conceit onli be langage.
 The soule be grace repressith al outrage,
 Namli whan resoun hath the souereyntie 3380
 To bridle passiouns of sensualite.
- Kynde onto man hath youen elloquence,
 A thyng couenable in especiall
 Whan that it is conveied bi prudence, 3384
 To talke of mateeris that be natural
 And secrees hid aboute celestial, —
 Doth entrete of sunne, moone & sterris
 Thyinfluent poweer doun sent of pes & werris. 3388

3352. maner] mateer H.

3355. memoire B. 3366. be] with H.

3373. For] & H — or] & B. 3374. ferr] full H.

3376. haueth] hath H. 3386. secretis H.

3388. Thyinflunce R.

the fifth is
 Memory, that
 nothing may be
 forgotten;

for forgetfulness
 should not
 hinder invention
 or trouble the
 order of dis-
 position.

3368 These things
 are necessary
 to every able
 orator.

3376 All earthly crea-
 tures are dumb
 by nature;
 only man has
 the power of
 speech.

3384 Nature has
 given him
 eloquence, a
 convenient
 thing when it
 is prudently
 managed.

- Man only can talk about the universe and express his thoughts in words. God of al this hath graunted knowleching
Onli to man bi wisdam and resoun,
And thoruh langage youe to hym shewyng,
Outward to make declaracioun 339²
Of the heuenli cours & sondri mocion,
Diuers chaunges, &, pleyntli to diffyne,
The reuolucion of the speeris nyne.
- He can discuss the moving and mutations, accord and discord of the four elements, the coming and departing of earthly things; Men bi langage shewe out ther ententis, 339⁶
The naturall meeuynge & mutaciouns,
Accord & discord of the foure elementis,
Kyndli variaunce of foure complecciouns,
The generacioun* & the corrupciouns 340⁰
Of erthli thynges, contrarie ech to other,
Corrupcioun of oon engendryng to another.
- and he is taught by language to be steadfast in virtue. This the poweer & the precellence
Youe vnto man, which is resonable, 340⁴
That bi langage and bi elloquence
A man is tauht in vertu to be stable, —
Of soule eternal, of bodi corumpable,
Tauht *with* his tunge whil he is alyue 340⁸
Of his defaultis how he shal hym shryue.
- Bochas tells us that there is natural rhetoric learned in youth, and the art of eloquence to which we come only by great diligence. Bochas eek tellith, touchyng rethorik,
Ther been too maneres: oon is of nature,
Lernyd in youthe, which doth oon spek[e] lik 341²
As he heereth & lerneth bi scripture; —
Crafft of rethorik youe to no creature
Sauff to man, which bi gret dilligence
Be studie kometh to crafft of elloquence. 341⁶
- Language enables preachers to teach the people virtuously, and instills in folk the respect of holy church. Crafft of langage and of prudent speche
Causeth prechours bi spiritual doctryne
Vertuousli the peepke for to teche,
How thei shal lyue bi moral disciplyne. 342⁰
Langage techeth men to plauzte vyne,
Enfourmeth folk to worshepe hooli cherche,
The artificeer treuli for to werche.
- But there are some who say that God has more regard to our hearts than to our language. Yit ther be summe that pleyntli preche and teche, 342⁴
Haue of langage this oppynyoun:
God ha[th] nat most reward onto speche,
But to the herte & to thaffeccioun;

3400. generaciouns B.

3413. &] or R. 3416. to] bi R.

3426. nat] om. H — reward] rewardid H.

- Best can guerdone the inward entencioun 3428
 Of eueri man, nat after the visage,
 But lik the menyng of ther inward corage.
 To vttre langage is gret dyuersite [p. 339]
 Whan that men shewe theeffect of ther menyng, 3432
 Be it of ioie or off aduersite,
 Cheer for taccord therwith* in vtt[e]ryng,
 Now debonaire, sumwhile rebukyng,
 And in rehersyng, lik cheer alwei tapplie, 3436
 Be it of rudnesse, be it of curteisie.
 Of discrecioun sette a difference
 In his pronouncyng to perce or vndirmyne,
 To drawe the iuge vnto his sentence 3440
 Or to his purpos to make hym to enclyne,
 Seen wher he be malencolik or benigne, —
 Or his mateer be vttrid or vnclosid,*
 Considre afforn how that he is disposid. 3444
 Peised al this thyng, the rethoricien,
 With other thynges which appertene of riht
 To craftt of speche, he mut conueye & seen
 Mateeris of substauce & mateeris that be liht, 3448
 Dispose hymself tentretyn euery wiht
 Lik to purpos & fyn of his mateere,
 As for the tyme rethorik doth requere.
 As bexauple, myn auctour* doth record, 3452
 Men sette at werre, in herte ferr* assonder,
 The rethoricien to make hem for taccord
 Mut seeke weies & menys heer & yonder,
 Of old rancour tappese the boistous thonder, 3456
 Be wise examplis & prouerbis pertynent
 Tenduce the parties to been of oon assent.
 A man also that stant in heuynesse,
 Dispeired and disconsolat, 3460
 The rethoricien mut doon his besynesse,
 The ground considred & felt of his estat,
 The cause serchid whi he stant desolat,
 Which to reffourme be dilligent labour 3464
 Is the trewe offis of eueri oratour.

There is great variety in our means of expression, depending upon our feelings

and according with our intentions, as, for example, when we try to win over a judge.

Thus the rhetorician must prepare himself to treat all manner of subjects and in many different ways.

He must bring warring men to concord and allay the thunder of old rancour,

and he must also aid and comfort those who are despaired and disconsolate.

3434. for taccord therwith] of accord therof B.
 3443. vnclosid] enclosid B. 3444. that] *om.* H.
 3445. the] bi R, J. 3446. apperteneth R.
 3449. tentretyn] tentren H, tentrete J, P.
 3452. As] A H — myn auctour] Rethorik B.
 3453. werre] a werre R — ferr] be ferr B.

In old days
the virtuous
words of ora-
tors appeared
the wrath of
tyrants,

Of rethoriciens whilom that wer old
The sugrid langage & vertuou daliaunce
Be goode exaumples & prouerbes that thei tolde, 3468
Woordes pesible enbelissed with plesaunce,
Appesid of tirauntes the rigerous vengauunce,
Sette aside ther furious sentence
Bi vertu onli of prudent elloquence. 3472

but on the
other hand
men may often
see fools and
brainless people
talking at
random.

And in contrarie,* pleyntli to conclude,
Men seen alday bi cleer experience
Folk vnauised, & hasti foolis rude,
And braynles people, of wilful necligence, 3476
Because thei wern bareyn of elloquence,
Vttringe* ther speche as nakid folk & bare,
For lak of rethorik ther mateer to declare.

Just as purple
belongs to
kings and rich
garments fret
with precious
stones, pleasant
objects to the
sight,

¶ Bi cleer exaumples, as purpil, who takþ heede, 3480
Longeth to kynges, in stori men may fynde,
With clothes of gold & riche velwet weede
Fret with rubies and othir stonis Ynde,
Saphirs, emeraudis, perlis of ther kynde, — 3484
As alle thes thynges aproprid been of riht,
Plesaunt obiectis to a mannys siht,

so is the
speech of
rhetoricians,
like the song
of musiciens, a
glad object to
the hearing.

So the langage of rethoriciens
Is a glad obiect to mannys audience, 3488
Witþ song mellodious of musiciens,*
Which doth gret counfort to euery hih presence.
Bexaumples as* Amphioun, witþ song & elloquence
Bilte the wallis of Thebes the cite, 3492
He hadde of rethorik so gret subtilite.

Amphion built
the walls of
Thebes with
his eloquence
and song, for
men were so
attracted that
all the country
came to help
him.

In his langage ther was so gret plesaunce,
Fyndyng therbi so inli gret proffit,
That al the contre kam to his obeissaunce, 3496
To heere hym speke thei hadde so gret delit;
The peeples envirooun hadde such an appetit
In his persone, in pes & in bataille:
Heer men may seen what rethorik doth auaille! 3500

3472. vertu onli] þe vertu H.
3473. contraire B.
3478. Vttrid B.
3485. As] om. H.
3489. Musiciens B.
3491. as] of B.

[How Sextus werreide Tryumvir, and of the deth of grete Antonye and Cleopatras.]¹

FOLWYNG the ordre Bochas of his book,
With penne in hond[e], castyng up his eye,
 Tofor hym *cam* pale of cheer & look
 A myhti prince, sone onto Pompeye,
 Callid Sextus, which as bookis seye,
 Delited hym, with a gret naue
 Lik a pirat to robben on the se.

Bochas, looking up, saw before him a mighty prince, Sextus, son of Pompey, who robbed on the sea like a pirate.

To his fadir contrarie in such caas, —
 For eueri pirat of custum he dede hate,
 Vpon the se whos vsage alwey was
 Ageyn[es] hem proudli to debate,
 Pursued hem erli and eek late, —
 Wher this Sextus, to his gret repreeff,
 Was of* the se a robbour and a theeff.

3508 He was very different from his father, who hated pirates;

3512

The sclaudre of hym* gan to spreede ferre, [p. 340]
 Reportid was to many ferr contre;
 With Tryumvir* this Sextus gan a werre, —
 Which is an offis and a dignite
 Bi the Romeyns *commyttid* onto thre
 Notable estatis, chose for* cheualrie,
 Thempire al hool to gouerne & to guie.

3516 and his ill fame was widespread. He began a war with the Triumvirate,

3520

The firste of hem namyd Lepidus,
 And the secounde callid Octouyan,
 The thridde in noumbre was Antonyus,
 Ageyn[s] which thre Sextus, this proude man,
 Of surquedie a newe werre gan,
 Afforn bi Iulius for his rebellioun
 Banished for euere out of Roome toun.

Lepidus, Octavian and Mark Antony.

3524

Triumvir of politik gouernaunce,
 Weel auised afforn in ther resouns,
 Tretyng for pes bi notable purueyaunce
 With proude Sextus vndir condiciouns
 Write & enact in ther conuenciouns, —
 But anon afftir, list no while tarie,
 He to his promys was froward & contrarie.

3532 The Triumvirs first made peace with him under conditions, but Sextus was perverse

3514. of] on B. 3515. hym] hem B.
 3517. Tryumvir] tryumphir B — this] with H. 3520. for] of B.
 3521. 2nd to] om. H. 3523. Octavian P (*ibroughout*).
 3525. this] the R. 3527. bi] om. H. 3535. his] om. R.

¹ MS. J. leaf 139 recto.

- and broke his agreement.
Bochas, disgusted with his lack of virtue, did not care to magnify his name by writing about him.
- For his convict outraious falsnesse, 3536
And on the se for his robberye,
Bochas of hym writ no long processe,
Hauyng disdeyn his name to magnefie;
For he to vertu list nothing applic, — 3540
The difference cause which [is] in thestat
Atwixe knihthod & liff of a pirat.
With fugityues, theuys and robbours
And men exiled out of Roome toun, 3544
Banished peple, fals conspiratours,
With othir convict of moordre & tresoun, —
He took al such vndir proteccioun;
And oon Moena, a cherl of his certeyn, 3548
Of fourti shippes he made hym a capteyn.
- He associated with fugitives and men of evil life, and made one Moena captain of 40 of his ships.
- The said[e] cherl vnwarli tho began
Folwe the nature of his condicioun,
Allied hymself[e] with Octauyan 3552
Ageyn his lord[e], bi ful fals tresoun;
Witb al his naue and shippes he cam down,
Spared nat to meete of verray pride
With Menecrates, that was on Sextus side. 3556
- This churl allied himself with Octavian and came down against his lord;
- but as soon as the battle began, Octavius' ships were sunk by a storm, and Sextus fled in disaster.
- But also soone as the bataile gan
And the parties togidre sholde gon,
Alle the vessellis of Octauyan
With sodeyn tempest wer drownid euerichon 3560
Beside a castell bilt of lym & ston
Callid Nauletum, wher yit to gret repreff
Sextus fledde & was brouht to myscheeff.
- He then went to Greece to fight Antony, but was taken and slain.
- Wente into Grece to make hym stronge ageyn 3564
To holde a bataile with Antonyus,
Take in his komyng bi strengthe of a capteyn
Longyng to Antoyne, callid Furnyus,
Whilom neuwe to Cesar Iulius: 3568
And or duk Sextus myhte ferþer weende,
He slay[e]n was & made ther an eende.
- One of the Triumvirs was Lepidus, who reconciled Antony with Octavian;
- Of Tryumvir in thempire, as I tolde,
Ther was a capteyn callid Lepidus, 3572
Which bi his offis lik as he was holde,
Riht besi was, the book rehersith thus,

3546. &] & of R, J. 3549. a] om. H. P. 3553. bi] witb R, J.
3556. Menecratus P — on Sextus side] an homy side H.
3562. repreff] preeff R. 3563. was brouht] brouht was H.
3568. Cesar] om. R. 3570. an] his R, P, H 5.

- To reconcile the proude Antonyus
 To the grace of gret Octouyan, 3576
 Ech thyng forgete wherof the werre gan.
- And to conclud shortli, who list see,
 Fortune a while was to hym *gracious*,
 Thempire al hool *gouernid* bi thes thre: 3580
 Lordship of Affrik hadde Lepidus,
 Bi which he wex proud & contrarious,
 To hym assigned vndir *commissiouns*
 Fulli the noumbre of tuenti legiouns. 3584
- Wherof in herte he kauhte such a pride,
 Causyng be processe his destruccioun.
 Surquedie a while was his guide,
 From his estat til he was falle doun; 3588
 Namli whan he, of fals *presumpcioun*,
 Took upon hym of malis to werreye
 The said Octouyan, & gan hym disobeie.
- Whan Octouyan his malis dide see, 3592
 That he gan wexe sodenli *contrarie*,
 He threw hym doun from his dignite,
 Cast hym in exil, list no lenger tarie.
 Loo, how Fortune sodeynli *can varie*, 3596
 To maken hym that hadde *gouernaunce*
 Off al Affrik to comen to myschaunce!
- Another prince, Cesar Lucyus, [p. 341]
 Exiled was fro Roome the cite 3600
 Bi his vncl, the saide Antonyus,
 Of wilfulnesse & hasti cruelte;
 For in that tyme, as men may reede & see,
 Contreued causes wer founde up* of malis 3604
 Texile princis notable holde & wis.
- Summe because thei heeld[e] with Cesar,
 Other for Pompeie that heeld on that partie, 3608
 Summe for ther good, afforn or thei wer war,
 Summe for suspecioun, summe for envie,
 Summe for thei koude nat flatre nouter lie,
 Summe for vertues, which was gret[e] route,
 Because thei wern so stable in ther trouthe. 3612

and for a time
 the three
 governed the
 empire in peace.

Finally Lepidus,
 who was lord
 of Africa,
 maliciously
 disobeyed
 Octavian,

who exiled
 him. Lo, how
 Fortune can
 vary!

Another prince,
 Cæsar Lucius,
 was exiled from
 Rome by his
 uncle Antony
 out of wil-
 fulness.
 Many notable
 princes were
 then exiled on
 contrived
 causes:

some for siding
 with Cesar or
 Pompey, others
 for their
 wealth or out
 of hatred, or
 because they
 were honest
 and could not
 flatter and lie.

3576. gret] om. R. 3579. *gracious*] contraryvs H.
 3600. from R. 3603. For in] fro H. 3604. up] out B.
 3610. nouter] nor H, J.

- Paulus Lucius was exiled for malice after the death of Antony and Cleopatra.
- In this trouble dreedful & odious,
As is rehersed in ordre ye may reede,
The noble kniht, Paulus Lucyus,
Exilid was of malis & hatreede, 3616
Folwyng upon the grete horrible deede,
The pitous deth & the hatful caas
Of gret Antonye and Cleopatras.
- I shall not write their tragedy because Chaucer has already done so in his *Legende of Cupide*.
- The tragedie of these ilke tweyne 3620
For me as now shal be set aside,
Cause Chauceer, cheef poete of Breteyne,
Seyng ther hertis koude nat deuyde,
In his book, the Legende of Cupide, 3624
Remembryng ther, as oon thei dide endure,
So wer thei buryed in oon sepulture.
- It were presumption for me to write again a thing once said by Chaucer.
- Thyng onys said be labour of Chauceer
Wer *presumpcioun* me to make* ageyn, 3628
Whos makyng was so notable & enter,
Riht *compendious* and notable in *certeyn*.
Which to reherse the labour wer but *veyn*,*
Bochas *remembryng* how Cleopatras 3632
Caused Antonye* that he destroyed was.
- As Bochas says, Cleopatra caused Antony's destruction. He fell in love with her, and as she desired to be empress, he made war on Octavian.
- Hir auarice was so importable,
He supprised with hir gret fairnesse,
Folwyng ther lustis foul & abhominable, 3636
She desiryng to haue be emperesse;
And he, alas, of froward wilfulnesse,
To plesen hire, vnhappily began
To werreye the grete Octouyan. 3640
- Froward ambition made him wish to reign alone in Rome.
- Froward ambicioun sette his herte affire
To clymben up to the imperial see,
To haue pocioune of the hool empire,
Took upon hym, yiff it wolde haue be, 3644
To regne allone in Roome the cite,
Cleopatras to fostren in hir pride,
Title of Octauyan for to sette aside.
- First he fought on the sea and was put to flight. Despairing, he went home,
- With multitude of many legiouns, 3648
As I haue told, ageyn Octauyan,
To hym acrochid of dyuers regiouns
Gret multitude of many manli man;

3613. dreedful] hatful R.

3628. make] take B, H.

3631. Which] wher H — veyn] in veyn B, R, J.

3633. Antoine B.

First on the se to werreye he began, 3652
 Wher he was first, maugre al his miht,
 To his confusioun vnwarli put to fliht.

Dispeired, fledde hom to his contre, 3656
 Knowyng no* helpe nor mene to recure,
 But to ences of his aduersite,
 Whan that he sauh this woful auenture,
 Geyn Octouyan he myhte nat endure,
 With a sharp suerd his daungeer to dyuerte 3660
 Hysillff he rooff vnwarli to the herte.

Of whos deth the queen Cleopatras
 Took a sorwe verray importable;
 Because ther was no recure in the caas, 3664
 Thouhte of his wo she wolde be partable,
 Whos fatal eende pitous & lamentable:
 Slouh eek hirsilf[e], loue so did hir raue;
 Afftir thei bothe buryed in o graue. 3668

3655. Dispeired R. 3656. no] non B.
 3657. ences] thences H.

¶ **Finis libri Sexti.**

¶ **Incipit liber septimus.**

BOOK VII

[Off Antonye son and heire to grete Antonye, and of
Cesarius, Iulia, Agrippa, Cassius, and Galbus.]¹

THIS stori eendid, last of þe sixte book, [p. 343] This story, the last of the sixth book, ended, Bochas leaned on a chest and fell asleep. But just as he began to take his rest, a great number of people appeared to him, 4

Bochas weri, thouhte for the beste,
Of gret trauaile oppressed *in* his look,
Fill in a slombre lenyng on a cheste,
Fulli in purpos to haue* take his reste.
But euene as he sholde his reste haue take,
Cam a gret pres & made *hym* to a-wake.

¶ First of that felashipe *cam* the sone & heir 8
Of Antonye, with blood spreynt al his weede,
Callid eek Antonye,* falle in gret dispeir
Cause Octoyuan bar to *hym* hatreede,
Whos suerde he fledde, quakyng in his dreede, 12
To an old temple socour for to haue,
Trustyng fro deth the* place sholde *hym* saue.

In that temple Cesar was deified,
Of whom be Romeyns set up a gret image; 16
But whan he sauh [that] he was espied,
He ran to Iulius hih upon the stage,
Gan *hym* tenbrace in his pitous rage, —
He, rent away be sodeyn violence, 20
Vnwarli slayn; ther geyned no diffence.

¶ Next in ordre *cam* Cesarius,
Of whom ther fill a wonder pitous caas,
Whilom begete of Cesar Iulius 24
Vpon the yonge faire Cleopatras,
Slayn in his youthe, thus writeth Bochas,
As Octouyan dide *hym*silff assigne,
For he *geyn* Romeyns sholde nat maligne. 28

where Cæsar was deified, as he embraced Cæsar's image.

Next came Cæsarius, son of Julius Cæsar and Cleopatra. He too was slain in his youth by Octavian.

1. vjte B. 4. in] on H — a] his R, P.
5. to haue] tauē B — to haue take his] for to take a H.
7. &] om. H. 8. Phelishippe R.
10. Antonye] Antoyne B — disespeir R. 11. to] vn to H.
14. the] that B. 23. pitous] om. H.
28. *geyn* Romeyns sholde] ageyn Romayns did H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 140 recto.

- Julia, Octavian's daughter, began, howling and crying, to tell Bochas her grievous complaint; for she was exiled by her father in punishment of her lechery, and she died in poverty.
- ¶ Folwyng in ordre, Iulia began
 Hir greuouſ comyleynt to Bochas ſpecche,
 Whilom douhtir to grete Octouyan,
 With weepyng eyen gan to houle & crie, 32
 Which bi hir fadir to punſhe hir lecherie
 Exilid was out of hir contre,
 For lak of ſocour deide in pouerte.
- Her ſon Agrippa, who ſpent his time in ſlumber and idleneſſe, was allowed to die in miſchief by Octavian.
- ¶ Hir ſone Agrippa, yong & tendre of age, 36
 Born off hih blood[e], Bochas doth expreſſe,
 Cam next in ordre, pale of his viſage,
 Which ſpent his tyme in ſlombre & idilneſſe, 40
 Froward to vertu; & for his wrechidneſſe
 Octovyan, which was gret[e] routhe,
 Suffrid hym deie at myſcheeff for his ſlouthe.
- After Agrippa came Caſſius of Parma, a manly knight, a poet and friend of Mark Antony.
- ¶ Afftir Agrippa cam forth anon riht 44
 Caſſius of Parme, a famous gret contre,
 Which in Itaille was holde a manli knyht,
 With Marc Antonye* weel cheriſſhed & ſecre,
 Bood in his court, & therwithal parde 48
 Gretli allowed, firſt for his cheualrie,
 And for his notable famous poiſye.
- He was accuſed to Octavian for having aſſented to the death of Ceſar,
- And therwithal he hadde in exiſtence
 A riht gret name & ſtood in gret fauour
 For his knihthod & for his hih prudeneſſe. 52
 Afftir accuſid vnto the emperour
 Octouyan for a coniuatour,
 He ſholde haue bee of froward fals entent
 To Iulius deth fulli of* aſſent. 56
- for which Octavian had him taken and offered up in ſacrifice to Iulius' image.
- For which be bidding of Octouyan
 Take he was, beyng but yong of age;
 And as myn auctour weel remembre* can,
 Brouht tofor Iulius hih upon a ſtage, 60
 Ther offrid up onto his ymage
 Be cruel deth, the ſtori tellith thus,
 For the fals moordre of Ceſar Iulius.

32. eyen] *om.* R, J.

33. hir] his H.

44. Parma P.

46. Antonye B.

59. remembre] reherſe B.

¶ Aftir the deth of saide Cassius,
 Another *cam* of Roome the cite,
 Which, as I reede, callid was Galbus,
 Of a pretour hauyng the dignite;
 And for suspeciou[n] slay[e]n eek was he,
 His eyen first out of his hed wer rent,
 For Iulius deth than into exil sent.
 Toward his exil bi *brigauntes* he was slayn.
 And aftir that, withyne a litil while,
 Of his labour nouthur glad nor fayn,
Bochas began to direct his stile
 To gret Herodes, breefli to compile
 His greuous fall & hooli the maneere
 To sette in ordre heer next, as ye shal heere.

64 Galbus, a prætor, was slain by brigands after his eyes had been torn out. He was exiled on suspicion of aiding in Cæsar's death.

72 *Bochas* next turned to Herod the Great.

76

[How the tiraunt herodes slouh wiff and children
 and deied atte mischeff.]¹

REMEMBRYNG first in Iurie he was kyng,
 Antipater his fadir, who list see,
 In Arabia myhtili regnyng
 Ouir the prouyce callid Ydumee.
 This same Herodes, gard[e]lyn of Gallile,
 Ordeyned was, [first] for his hih prudence,
 And for his notable knihtli excellence.
 Famous in manhod, famous of* his lyne,
 Famous also bi procreacioun,
 I reede also he hadde wyues nyne;
 And among alle, as maad is menciou[n],
 To his plesauce and his oppynyoun,
 Maister of stories reherseth ther was oon
Mariannes, fairest of euerichon.
 Bi whom she hadde worthi sones tweyne,
Alisaundre and *Aristobolus*.
 But for his sustir* dide at hir disdeyne,
 Callid *Saloma*, the stori tellith thus,
 He vnto hir wex suspecious,
 Because she was accusid of envie
 Bi *Saloma* touchyng auoutrie.

80 He was king in Jewry, son of Antipater, and for his knighthood made guardian of Gallilee.

84

[p. 344] A famous man, he had nine wives. *Mariannes* was fairest of them all.

88

92 She had two sons by him, *Alexander* and *Aristobolus*; but because his sister *Saloma* disdained at her and accused her of adultery, Herod became suspicious and slew her.

96

64. saide] the sayde R.

66. reede] tolde H. 74. began] gan H. 82. garden H.

85. of] in B, H. 88. among] mong R.

93. *Aristobolus*] *Aristobus* R, *Aristolus* J, *Aristobolus* H.

94. his sustir] hir stustir B.

¹ MS. J. leaf 140 verso.

Afterwards he greatly regretted her death.

Ageyn[e]s hire of rancour sodenli
 He gan of herte greuouusli disdeyne; 100
 With rigerous suerd he slouh hir furiousli.
 But as the stori doth vs acerteine,
 He for hir deth felt aftirward gret peyne,
 Euere whan it cam to his remembraunce, 104
 Hir port, hir cheer, hir womanli plesaunce.

That is what follows when a prince is hasty to believe every tale he hears. For sorrow Herod fell into melancholia

Loo, what it is a prince to be hasti,
 To eueri tale of rancour to assente,
 And, counsaillles, proceede wilfulli 108
 To execucioun, of froward fals entente;
 For Herodes so sore dede hym* repente
 That he for thouht[e] fill into anoye
 Of hertli sorwe & malencolie. 112

and, troubled with fits of fury and bad dreams, was lunatic once a month.

Reste hadde he non novther day nor niht,
 Troublid with furye that he wex frenetik,
 With dremys vexid & many an vnkouth siht; 116
 Of cheer nor colour to no man he was lik,
 And eueri moneth onys lunatik.
 A gret[e] while he hadde this woful lyff
 For sorwe onli he hadde slayn his wiff.

But he was made king of Judæa by Antony and Octavian,

And as the stori weel reherse can, 120
 In the Capitoile mid Roome the cite,
 Bi Antonye and bi Octouyan
 He crownid was & maad kyng of Iude,
 Bi the Senat maad theron a decre, 124
 And registred that he and his kynreede
 Sholde in that lond lynealli proceede.

although a foreigner and a usurper. This was at the time of the birth of Christ Jesus.

In Roome was maad the* confirmacioun
 To this Herodes, bookis specefie, 128
 Beyng a foreyn the translacioun
 Was maad of Iuda & of Iuerye,
 Sceptre, crowne, with al the regalie
 Bi hym vsurpid, as ye haue herd tofor, 132
 Vpon the tyme whan Crist Iesus was born.

103. aftirward] *om.* R.

109. entente] *om.* R.

110. so sore dede hym] dede hym so sore B — dede hym] he did R, J, he dyd P.

113. nor] *ne* H, J. 116. no] *om.* H. 117. onys] he wex R.

119. he] *bat* he H.

127. the] a B. 133. Crist] cast R.

- This same Herodes bi procuracioun
Of Antonye did also occupie,
Bi Augustus plener commyssioun
The grete estat[e] callid Tetrarchie
In too kyngdames, *with* al the regalie:
Of Traconytides, Iturye eek also,
Bi the Romeyns maad lord of bothe too.
- Maister of stories reherseth of *hym* thus:
For comendacioun in especiall
In Ascalon he bilt a statli hous
Of riht gret cost, a paleis ful roiall,
Was non so riche, for to reknyn all.
Aftir which, myn auctour doth so write,
He callid was Herode Ascolonyte.
- This same Herodes, cruel of nature,
Of cheer & port passyng ambicious,
Ay to be uengid dide his besi cure
On al that wern to hym contrarious.
His wyues brothir Aristobolus,
In Iherusalem cheeff bisshop, as I reede,
Falsli he slouh of malis & hatreede.
- Vniustli regnid, born heuy thoruh his reum,
His herte fret & kankrid with envie.
Another bisshop in Iherusalem,
Callid Hircanus, myn auctour list nat lie,
This same Herodes in his malencolie
Slouh hym vnwarli be rancour ful vengable,
Sitting at dyneer at his owne table.
- Ther was no *man* of corage mor cruell
Nor mor desirous to be magnified;
To make his name also perpetuell
Foure statli cites he hath edefied,
Of which the names been heer specefied:
Cesaria, Sebasten, cites souereyne,
Antipadra, Cipre, the othir tweyne.
- He hadde also a fals condicioun:
He truste[d] non that was of his kynreede,
His sonis tweyne hadde in suspeciou, n
Ther purpos was to slen hym of hatreede,
Whan he wer ded[e] hopyng to succede.

Herod also occupied the estate of Tetrarch.

136

140

144

148

152

156

160

164

168

[p. 345]

172

He built a stately palace in Ascalon, which Bochas thought was to his credit.

But he was cruel and ambitious, and slew his wife's brother Aristobolus, Bishop of Jerusalem, out of hatred.

He reigned unjustly and killed another bishop named Hircanus as he sat at dinner at his own table.

No man was ever more desirous of fame. To perpetuate his name he built four stately cities.

He also had the evil habit of not trusting his own family, and suspecting his two sons made them to be slain without cause.

149. port & cheer R. 156. kankrid] cancrik H.
158. Hircamvs H. 168. Antipätra and Cypre P.

And causeles, as fadir most vnkynde,
Made hem be slayn, in stori thus I fynde.

He was deceitful and a tyrant; and when the three magi came to Jerusalem to worship Jesus, whom they called king,

In al his werkyng he was founde double, 176
A gret[e] tiraunt holde thoruh his rew[m],
Neuer thyng so gretli dede him* trouble,
As whan thre kynges kam to Iherusalem,
Iesus to seeke, that was [born] in Bethlem, 180
Boldli affermyng, cause of ther komyng
Was to worshepe that blissid yonge king.

he imagined that a child had been born to deprive him of his realm,

The which[e] thyng whan he did aduertise, 184
Prophecies remembryng & writyngis,
Withynne hymselff a mene he gan devise
First to destroye thes hooli famous kynges;
Namli, whan he knew of ther offrynges,
Imagynyng, gan suppose blyue 188
The child was born that sholde hym depryue,

and, falling into a rage, slew all the infants of Bethlehem.

Newli descendid from Daudid down be lyne, —
Cast almost Herodes in a rage;
Of cursid herte gan frowardli maligne, 192
Lik a tiraunt of venymous outrage
Slouh al the childre *witbynne* too yeer age
Aboute Bethlem a ful large space;
He spared non for fauour nor for grace. 196

One of his own children, out at nurse, was slain by his knights with the others, probably out of vengeance.

On of his childre beyng at norcerye,
As the stori put in remembraunce,
Of auenture or thei koude it espie
His knihtes slouh; I trowe it was vengauce. 200
Ech tiraunt gladli eendith *witb* myschaunce,
And so must he that wex ageyn Crist wood,
Which for his sake shadde innocentes blood.

Altogether 144,000 children were put to death for Christ's sake.

The noumbre of childre that wer slayn in deede 204
Aboute Bethlem & in tho parties,
An hundrid fourti four thousand, as I reede,
Too yeer of age souht out be espies*
Of Herodes; & for the prophecies 208
Of Cristes berthe mencioun did[e] make,
Thei wer echon slay[e]n for his sake.

176. werkyng] werkes H. 178. him] hem B.

180. Bethlem] bedlem R, Bedleme H, Bethleme J.

195. Bethleem R, P, Bedlem H, R 3, Bethelam J.

198. stori] om. R. 206. fourti] forty & H. 207. bespies B.

- Fro that day forth, as maad is mencioun,
 He fill in many vnkouth malladie;
 His flessch gan turne to corrupcioun,
 Fret with wermys upon ech partie,
 Which hym assailed bi gret tormentrie:
 His leggis suell[e], corbid blak gan shyne;
 Wher vengauunce werkith, a-dieu al medecyne.
- Of his seeknesse the stench was so horrible,
 Tawaite on hym no man myhte abide;
 Vnto hymself his careyn wex odible,
 So sore he was troublid on ech side.
 Lechis for hym did a bath prouyde,
 But al for nouht; in such myscheeff he stood,
 Of greuous constreynt he sodenli wex wood.
- In tokne he was weri of his liff,
 So importable was his mortal peyne,
 To pare an appil he axed a sharp knyff, —
 His malladie did hym so constreyne, —
 Fulli in purpos to kutte his herte in tweyne.
 The knyff he rauhte, leiser whan he fond; —
 Oon stood beside, * bakward drouh his hond.
- For peyne vnnethe his wynd he myhte drawe,
 Gaff al his freendis in comaundement
 Bi a decre & a furious lawe,
 That al the worthi of parties adiacent,
 Which that wer fayn or glad in ther entent
 Of his deth, he, void of al pite,
 The same day thei sholde slay[e]n bee.
- This cursid wrech, this odious caitiff,
 I reede of non stood ferther out of grace,
 In sorwe & myscheeff eendid hath his liff.
 Ech man was glad[e] whan he shold[e] pace.
 And for his stori doth this book difface
 With woful clauses of hym whan I write,
 Therfor I caste no mor of hym* tendite.
- From that day Herod fell into a strange illness; his flesh corrupted and was tormented with worms; his legs swelled and bent and turned black.
- His odour was so awful that no man could wait on him, and a bath prepared by his physicians did him no good.
- Unable to stand it any longer, he went mad, and asking for a knife to pare an apple tried to kill himself.
- He could hardly draw in his breath for pain, and in his fury ordered all the worthies of the country, who were glad of his sickness, to be slain on the day of his death.
- Finally this cursed wretch came to an end. No one ever stood farther out of grace. His story disfigures this book.

¶ **Explicit.**

215. Which] with R. 216. blak] bak R.
 219. Tawaite] to waite H, to wait R 3.
 225. was] wex H. 226. inportable R. 229. 2nd in] on H.
 231. beside] behynde B.
 245. no mor of hym] of hym no mor B.

[Lenvoye.]

Herod, who
slew his wife
and children
and the infants
of Bethlehem
and frowardly
shewed malice
to Jesus, ended
miserably.

OFF Herodes the vnwar cursid fall, [p. 346]
The lyff vngracious of hym & his kinreede,
Eneer vengable in his estat roiall, 248
His wiff, his childre slouh of old hatreede;
Innocentis he made in Bethlem haede,
Regnyng in Iuda, born of a foreyn lyne,
The firste tiraunt (ye may the Bible reede) 252
Which ageyn Crist gan frowardli maligne.

His sword of
vengeance was
always ready
whet to shed
innocent blood.

His suerd of rigour, cruell & mortall,
Ay reedi whet to do vengauunce in deede,
Hasti, fumous with furies infernall 256
Of wilful malis innocent blood to sheede.
Dide execucioun also in womanheede,
Slouh his allies, which was a cursid signe, —
Was the firste cause he stode in dreede, — 260
Which ageyn Crist gan frowardli maligne.

He would have
no one his
equal to suc-
ceed him, and
as he was but
an alien, he
especially
dreaded Jesus,
who was of the
line of Jesse.

He wolde that non wer to hym egall
That day alyue in Israel to succede;
The berthē of Crist dradde in especiall, 264
Cause fro Iesse his lyne gan floure & seede.
He but a foreyn, cam in be fraude & meede,
Withoute title, to that estat vndigne,
The firste also, who list take heede, 268
Which ageyn Crist gan frowardli maligne.

Noble Princes,
do not oppres
your people;
remember the
end of Herod,
who maligned
against Christ.

Noble Pryncis, that gouerne all
This large world[e] bothe in lengthe & breede,
Whan ye sit hiest in your roial stall, 272
Doth nat the peeple oppresse nor ouerleede.
Vpon Herodes remembreth, as ye reede,
In what myscheeff that tiraunt dide fyne,
To shewe that non shal in his purpos speede, 276
Which ageyn Crist doth frowardli maligne.

[Off Antipas exilid bi Octavian and of Achelaus son
of herodes the secounde.]¹

Herod Antipas
succeeded
Herod the
Great; but as
he was exiled
by Octavian

COMPENDIOUSLI as ye haue herd þe fall
Of Herodes remembrid be Bochas,
How bi his testament set in especiall 280
To succede was Herode Antipas;

246. cursid vnwar H. 255. whet] wher R.
256. fumous] furious H. 265. gan] did H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 141 verso.

In hast exilid, of hym this was the caas,
 Bi Octovian to Vyenne, as I reede,
 Archelaus ordeyned to succede, 284

Sone of Herodes callid the secounde,
 Which in effect took pecessioun,
 In Iherusalem regned, as it is founde,
 Of whom myn auctour, for short conclusioun, 288
 Maketh in his book but smal mencioniun:
 Hym and his brothir set sodenli aside; —
 Of them to write no lenger list abide.

Sauff that he writ how forseid Antipas 292
 At Vyenne, a myhti gret cite,
 In [his] exil soone aftir slay[e]n was.
 Archelaus, succedyng in Iudee,
 With Herodias, the stori who list see, 296
 Bi Agrippa to Tiberie accusid,
 Of certeyn crymes koude nat been excusid.

A certeyn tyme comaundid to prisoun,
 Of themperour koude neuer gete grace; 300
 Ban[y]shed hym [ferr] from his regeoun
 Into Spayne for a certeyn space.
 And his worshepe breefli to difface,
 Fortune causid to his fynal repreff, 304
 He deide ther in pouert & myscheeff.

The fatal eende rehersed of thes tweyne,
 In what distresse that thei dide fyne,
 Myn auctour aftir gan his penne ordeyne 308
 To write the caas be many a woful lyne,
 Vpon the striff atween[e] Messalyne
 And othir tweyne stondyng bi hir side,
 Tofor Iohn Bochas how thei dide chide. 312

Tofor Bochas thei cam al thre to pleyne,
 Messalyne, wiff onto Claudius,
 Ageyn[e]s whom ther wer othir tweyne,
 Calligula and Tiberius, 316
 In whos tyme was slay[e]n Crist Ihesus.
 Touchyng debat that was among thes thre,
 Suende the processe, heer folwyng ye shal see.

and set aside,
 together with
 his brother, in
 favour of
 Archelaus,

my author says
 little about
 him, except
 that he was
 slain during
 his exile.
 Archelaus,
 accused by
 Agrippa to
 Tiberius,

was sent to
 prison and
 died in
 poverty in
 Spain.

Bochas next
 turned his
 pen to the
 unseemly
 quarrel bet-
 ween Messa-
 lina, wife of
 Claudius,

and Caligula
 and Tiberius,
 who upbraided
 one another in
 his presence.

282. this] thus H. 285. secounde] secunde in deede H, R 3.
 287. regned] regnyng H — it is founde] I reede H, R 3, R, J,
 H 5, I rede P.
 296. who list the story R, J.
 311. hir] his H. 319. Suende] sueng H, Suyd H 5, Suinge P.

[Off the striff / betwene, Calligula, Tiberius & messalyne.]¹

Tiberius and Caligula stood angrily before Bochas, with Messalina between them.

THIS emperesse namyd Messalyne, 320
As I haue told, was wif to Claudius,

Successour, as bookis determyne,

To Calligula callid Gayus.

And, as I fynde, that Tiberius 324

With Calligula, bothe wood for teene,

Stood affor Bochas, & Messalyne atweene,

Caligula first spoke, and he said to Messalina, without respect or shame,

Meetyng al thre with furious look & cheere. [p. 347]

Gayus Calligula, callid be his name, 328

Gan first reherse, anon as ye shal heere,

Withoute reuerence or any maner shame,

With an exordie to diffame,

Bochas present, felli gan abraide 332

To Messalyne, & euene thus he saide:

"You defamed, adulterous woman, what are you doing here in your mourning garments? I suppose you have come to visit the five most infamous women who ever lived.

¶ "Thou sclaundrid woman, noised in lecherie

Thoruh al the world, as folk thi name atwite,

And reportid for thyn auoutrie, 336

What dost thou heer in thi murnyng habite?

I trowe thou komest of purpos to visite

In this place thunhappi women fyve,

Touchyng disclaundre that euer wern alyue. 340

"As a token, one of them, Emilia, was taken in adultery and divorced by her husband.

The firste of hem callid Amylia,

And Lepida was named* the secounde,

Lyuia, Plaucia, & the fifte Elia,

Diffamed echon in deede, as it was founde. 344

In tokne wheroff the lecherye to confounde

Off Emylia, in auoutry take,

Was bi the lawe of hir lord forsake.

"It is well known that you murdered Drusus; nor are you any better than Claudia, who also was thrown out by her lord for adultery.

Bi the whilom was knowe that Drusus 348

Istranglid was and moordred be poison;

Lik to Claudia, douhtir of Claudius,

Which bi hir lord, the book makth mencioum,

Was thrown out, to hir confusioun, 352

For hir defaultis founde in auoutrie

Sclaundrid for euere; ther was no remedie.

328. Gayus] geyn H. 331. exordie] Exody H.

333. Messaline P. 334. noised in] namyd with H.

341. Emilia R, P, Emylia H. 343. Elia] Helya H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 142 recto.

Thou koudest whilom mak thi lord to slepe,
With certeyn drynkis to cast hym in a rerage, 356
 Bi which he was maad his bed to keepe,
 To gete leiseer in thi flouryng age,
 For to mysuse of fals lust thyn outrage,
 Anihter tyme took upon a weede, 360
 At the bordel dist amys for meede.

"You knew how to drug your husband and make him sleep; while you went to the brothel and debauched yourself for money."

Thyn appetit was verrey vnstaunchable;
 It is a shame to write it or expresse.
 Thyn hatful lyff was so abhominable, — 364
 Tiberi and I can bern heerof witesse."
 And with that woord anon she gan hir dresse,
 Whan she had herd[e] al ther fel langage,
 Gaff hem this ansuere *with* a sad visage: 368

"It is shameful to write about your insatiable lust and your hateful, abominable life. Tiberi and I can bear witness to it."

¶ "Certis," quod she, "I koude neuer keepe
 To saue my-silff, a woful creature, —
 I haue gret cause to compleyne & weepe
 My sclaudrous lyff, which I may nat recure. 372
 But I suppose I hadde it of nature
 To be such oon; for be daies olde
 An astronomyen so my fadir tolde,

"It is true," she replied, "I have good reason to weep over my scandalous life, but it was nature's fault; for when I was born an astronomer

At my berth taking the ascendent, 376
 Tolde longe afforn of my mys-gouernaunce:
 The sunne, the moone toward thorient
 Wer in the signe that bereth the ballaunce; —
 And saide also, mor for assuraunce, 380
 The same signe hadde be descripcioun
 His* foot in Virgyne, armyes in the Scorpioun.

told my father that the sun and moon were in Libra, and that Libra's foot was in the Virgin and his arms in Scorpio.

Amyd the heuene was Venus exaltat,
With Mars conioyned, þe book makth mencion; 384
 And Iubiter was also infortunat
 To my saide disposicioun,
Withynne the Fissh heeld tho his mansioun:
 Thus be the lordship pleyntli of Venus 388
 I was disposed for to be lecherous."

Venus was in a position of greatest influence, and, as the book says, in conjunction with Mars; and Jupiter too, was unfavourable to my disposition, and had his mansion in the Fish. Thus it is plain that Venus disposed me to be wanton."

In hir excus the saide Messalyne
 Gan alegge hir constellacioun;
 But prudent clerkis pleyntli determyne, 392
 Of the heuently cours the disposicioun

In this manner
Messalina
pleaded her
constellation in
excuse; but
clerks say that
no well be-
haved person
is constrained
to do wrong
by force.
Nor is there
any necessity
for living a
vicious life.
There is no
sin that is not
voluntary.

Yet Messalina
would not
leave off ex-
cusing herself.
“Hercules once
bore up the
heavens, yet
for all his
chivalry he
never could
overcome the
vice of lechery.

“And as for
you, Caligula
and Tiberius,
I shall not
heed what
either of you
say. You,
Gaius Caligula,
are yourself
besmirched, and
should know
better than
rebuke others.

“Your scanda-
lous behaviour
is reported
through all the
world: you
seduced your
three sisters,
and may well
blush for
shame. Don’t
blame me again
as long as you
live!

“It is not
fitting that a
thief should sit
in judgment
on theft, nor
should one
profligate
chastise others.

Is obeissaunt & soget to resoun,
That eueri man which weel gouernid is,
Is nat constreynd of force to doon amys, — 396
Nor bynt no man of necessite
Vicious lustis frowardli to sue.
A vertuous man stant at liberte
Fals inclynaciouns be prudence to remewe; 400
Euery man be grace may eschewe
All thyng to vertu that founde is contrarie:
For ther is no synne but it be voluntarie.

Yit for al this, the saide Messalyne 404
In hire excus[e] wolde nat been in pes:
“The heuene,” quod she, “as poetis determyne,
Was born up whilom be myhti Hercules,
Yit coude he neuere of nature ha[ue] reles, 408
For al his kniethod & his* cheualrie,
To ouercome the vice of lecherie.

But thou Calligula and thou Tiberius, [p. 348]
What-euer ye seyn I take therof non heede; 412
For thou Calligula, callid eek Gayus,
Thi-silff diffouldid with lecherie in deede,
To rebuke othir thou sholdest stonde in dræde,
But thi rebukis in parti for to quyte; 416
Who is diffouldid non othir sholde atwite.

Bi Fames trumpet thi sclaunder is out blowe,
Thoruh al the world reportid shamfullie,
Thi thre sustren fleshli thou dest hem knowe, — 420
Wex red for shame; and for thi partie,
For the vice of hatful lecherie
Duryng thi liff put me no mor in blame,
Which art thi-silff diffouldid in the same. 424

It sittith nat in no maner wise
A thief for theffte to sitte in iugement;
A lecherous man a lechour to chastise,
Nor he that hath al his lyff Ispent 428
In wast & riot, forfeitid & myswent,
To been a iuge othre to redresse,
Nor leprous lechis to cure men of seeknesse.

409. his] al his B.

411. 1st thou] om. H, R 3.

418. Fames] famous H — out] vp H. 420. dest] didst H.

423. thi] the R. 430. to] for to R.

I wolde ha suffrid and take [in] pacience 432 "If chaste
Yiff of Affrik the chast[e] Scipioun Scipio of Africa
Hadde me rebukid for* my gret offence: had rebuked
I wolde haue suffrid his yerde of iust resoun. me, or prudent
Or yif the famous prudent old Catoun old Cato, I
Hadde ageyn me in swich cas maad abraid, 436 should have
I wolde haue suffrid what-euere he hadde said. accepted it
with submis-
sion.

Or yif Lucrese for my correccioun "Or if
Hadde seid to me, for vertuou doctrine, 440 Lucrece had
Alle my surfetis myd of Roome toun, held up to
I wolde haue bowed [bothe] bak & chyne, me my ex-
To have obeied onto hir disciplyne, cesses I should
Shame for* a crepil, to stonde that hath no miht, 444 have bowed
To rebuke othir for thei go nat vpriht! down to her
discipline.

Ageyn[e]s the also I may replie, "I may also
Many another fals conspiracioun say that you
Touchyng mateeres of nigromancie, 448 dabbled in
And many another contreued fals poisoun necromancy,
Founde in too bookis, Bochas makth menciou, and, as Bochas
Oon callid Pugio, most superstitious, mentions,
And the secounde Inamyd Gladius, 452 concocted
poisons with
the help of two
books, and

Hable al this world tenvenyme & encloie; kept a list of
Ageyn thre statis duellyng in Roome toun, the people you
Ther namys write of them thou cast destroye, wished to de-
Which to remembre is gret abusioun. After stroy. After
A chest also fulfilled of poisoun, 456 your death
Aftir thi deth cast in the se, I reede, your poison
Bi which an hundred thousand fishes wer dede" . . . chest, cast into
the sea, killed
100,000 fishes.

¶ (On this mateer is tedious for tabide, 460 (This subject is
Namli to princis* born of hih estat; so unpleasant,
It sittith nat gentil blood to chide, especially to
Bi furious rancour to stonde at debat. princes, with
And for thes mateeres been infortunat, 464 its ill-bred
I wil passe ouer & no mor of hem write, quarreling,
Sauff of ther eende compendiousli tendite.) that I will pass
ouer to the
last part of it.)

432. in] *om.* R. 434. for] bi B.

444. for] to B, H, R 3, H 5.

446. I may also R.

453. this] be H.

461. princis] princis princessis B, H, R 3, R, J, P, R 2, H 3,
H 4, Sl, Add, H 5.

- "I have also something to say to you, Tiberius: the people of Campania scorned you for your unnatural vices,
- and even when you grew old you would not forbear, and used restoratives, so infatuated you were in your debauchery. "What right have you to scold me?"
- "I did wrong when I was young, as Gaius has just said, but you were outrageous all your life; and both of you became froward gluttons to enforce your excesses.
- "Moreover, Tibery, when you were emperor, you murdered Asinius, the famous orator,
- and you exiled the king of Parthia out of covetousness, for you wanted his wealth; and he died in distress.
- "You let Agrippina starve to death, although she ran to the image of Octavian in the temple for aid.
- "To the Tiberye I haue sumwhat to seyn:
Knowe and reportid be many a creature, 468
How in Chaumpayne folk hadde of the disdeyn
For thi most hatful lecherous ordure,
In thilke vice which is ageyn nature,
Which tacomplissh, void of al hap & grace, 472
Thyn abidyng was in suspescious place.
To swich fals lustis duryng al thi lyff,
List nat forber[e]n in thi latter age,
Thou vsist many riche restoratif 476
In suiche vnthrift tencrece thi corage,
Of ribaudi thou fill in such dotage, —
How maist thou thanne rebuke me? For shame!
Which in such caas art blottid with* diffame. 480
I dide amys, but it was in my youthe,
Horrible thynges, which Gayus heer hath told,
But thyn outrage, the* report is yit kouthe,
Thou dist hem vse bothe yong & old. 484
And for tafforce your vices manyfold,
Thou & Calligula, in al swich ribaudie,
Dide grettest surfet in froward glotonie.
Also Tiberye, thou beyng emperour, 488
Cruel causeles, & most malicious,
Dist moordre in Roome the famous oratour
Callid in his tyme prudent Asynyus,
Which thoruh thempire, Romeyns tolde thus, 492
Was liht & lanterne founde at al assaies,
Of rethorik[e] callid in his daies.
Thou wer eek cause that worthy* Nonomus, [p. 349]
Kyng of Parthois, thoruh thi cruelte 496
Exilid was, thou wer so coueitous
To haue possessioun of his tresour, parde, —
Deide in myscheeff and in pouerte.
Be sham[e]fast any wiht taccuse, 500
Which in such caas thi-silf canst nat excuse!
¶ To Agripyne thou dist ful gret outrage,
As Romeyn stories weel reherse can,
Whan she for socour to the gret image 504
Ran to be sauyd of Octouyan,
Mid the temple a place callid than,

480. with] for B. 483. outrage the] outrages be B.

495. worthy] werri B, werrey H, werry R, R 3, H 5, H 4,
werrei R 2, wery H 3, werreie Add, verry Sl, wourthy H 2.

Which halp hir nat þat she list thidir weende:
Put out be force; for hunger made *an* eende. 508

Thyn owyn brothir callid Germanicus,
Which in his tyme was so good a kniht, —
¶ Thi brothir also named eek* Drusus, —
Bothe wer poisowned & slayn ageyn[es] riht 512
Bi fals conspiryng of thyn imperial* myht.
Texcuse the moordre, thi-siluen at the leste
Wer clad in blak, at ther funeral feeste.

I haue no kunnyng, speche nor langage 516
To reherse nor make mencion
Specialli of the gret outrage
And sacrilege thou dist in Roome toun,
Be violence whan thou drouh[e] down 520
The image of Ianus, & aftir in al hast
Into Tibre madest hym to be cast.

And thou Calligula, among thi vices all,
Of surquedie and fals presumpcion 524
Woldest that men a god the sholde call,
Tween Pollux Castor to haue thi mansioun.
Fro whiche place* thou art now throwe down,
Which heeld thi-silff among the goddis seuene 528
Egal with Iubiter for to sitte in heuene.

Ansuere to me, heer beyng in presence,
Which of the foure, Mars, Ianus, Mynerue,
Or Mercurie, god of elloquence, 532
Hath rent the doun, as thou dist disserue,
Fro Iubiter in myscheef for to sterue?
That thou heer-aftir, wher-so thou lauh or frowne,
Shalt haue no fauour mor *with* hym to rowne. 536

With these defaultis & many another
Affor[n] rehersid in hyndryng of thi name —
How thou ordeynest first to slen thi brothir
With men of armes, which was to the gret shame; 540
¶ To Tholome thou dist also the same,
Sone & heir to kyng Iubatoun;
And many a senatour thou slouh in Roome toun.

511. also named eek] also callid B, eke namyd also H.

513. imperial] owen B. 521. al] al þe H.

526. Castor] & Castor H, P.

527. Fro whiche place] For which B.

- "You shut up
the granaries
and starved
the people of
Rome, so that,
dreadful to
say, they
ate their own
members.
- Shettist up myd Roome the cite 544
Ther gerneris, which neuer afforn was* seyn;
Wherbi enfamyned was the comounte, —
Pite to heere; this [is] plat & pleyn, —
Of necessite constreyned in certeyn 548
(Shame to reherse or put [it] in scripture)
Eet ther membris, a thyng ageyn nature.
- "I don't sup-
pose that
Jupiter or
Juno told you
to do this;
very likely it
was Venus,
who wanted to
flatter you, or
Mars. Soon
afterwards you
yourself were
murdered
by your own
servants.
- Iubiter nor Iuno the goddesse
Gaff no such counsail, I suppose, onto the; 552
But it was Venus, to flatre thyn hihnesse,
And furious Mars, bi froward cruelte
To slen senatours grettest of that cite;
Thi-silff soone aftir, wherof the toun was fayn, 556
Bi thi *seruauentes* moordrid were & slayn.
- And for tabate thyn outrage & [thi] pride,
Which[e] thou hast vsid al thi liff,
Lefft up thyn hed, looke *on* thi lefft[e] side, 560
Thou fyndere up of moordre & of striff!
¶ Slouh thou nat Cesonia thi wiff? —
Thi douhtir aftir, that callid was Drusill,
Of cursid entent thi malis to fulfill? 564
- "I am aston-
ished that
neither of you
is ashamed to
blame me for a
small mote like
lechery, and
cannot see the
beam in your
own eye.
- I haue *merueile* how any of you tweyne,
Thou Calligula or thou Tiberius,
Be nat ashamed any thyng to seyne
Ageyn[e]s me, with visage despitous 568
Me for tatwite that I was lecherous!
Of a smal mote ye *can* abraide me,
But in your eye a beam ye cannot see.
- "Where do
your soules
dwell? I sup-
pose Charon
landed you on
the strand of
Styx in hell,
- Wher haue your soules take *per* herbergage, 572
That been *contrarie with* me for to stryue?
I trowe that Caron hath maad your passage
Vp at the stonde in helle for taryue,
Ther ye abide, thus I [can] descryue, 576
Wher dredful Stix, callid *be* *infernal* flood,
Of *custum* renneth with furious wawes wood.

544. Shettist] Settist R, H 5 — myd] amyd H.

545. was] wer B. 547. is] *om.* R, J, P, H 5.549. it] *om.* R, J, R 3.558. thi] *om.* H, R 3, H 5.560. looke *on* thi] take *on* *be* H.576. *can*] *om.* R, J, H, R 3, H 5, P, Sl, H 4, H 3, R 2.

Radamantus, oon of the iuges tweyne,	[p. 350]	where Rhadamantus,
With kyng Mynos hath youe a iugement,	580	Minos, and Eacus have
Perpetueli ye shal abide in peyne;		ordained that you shall be
And Eacus hath ordeyned <i>your</i> torment:		forever drowned
In Flegeton,* the flood most violent,		in Phlegethon.
Ye shal be drowned & an eende make,	584	
Euere for tabide among the stremys blake.		
I may you calle of emperours the refus,		"You are the refuse of emperors, and ought to be ashamed to speak so discourteously to me." At this they lost countenance and no longer dared remain in her presence.
Ye sholde be shamfast to shewe out <i>your</i> visages,		
Verray astoned, dreedful and confus	588	
To haue to me so vncurteis langage!"		
Thus Messalyne daunted ther corage		
With hir femynyn crabbid elloquence.		
Thei durste no lenger abide in hir presence.	592	

[Off the most vicious tiraunt Nero that slouh Petir and Paule and atte laste himself.]¹

T HIS hatful stori <i>with</i> many a woful lyne		After this hateful quarrel,
Of Calligula and Tiberius,		with its odious and shameful rebukes, Nero appeared on the ring.
Touching þe strif tueen* hem & Messalyne,		
Shamful rebukis, froward & odious,	596	
Bi them rehersed with cheer most furious,		
As ye haue herd, heer eendeth ther chidyng;		
Nero the tirant kometh next onto þe ryng.		
Oon most cursid in <i>comparisoun</i>	600	He was one of the most cursed men who ever lived or reigned in Rome. His father was Domitius and his mother Agrippina.
That euere was, of hih or louh degre,		
Most disnaturel of condicioun		
Bi gret outrages of cursid cruelte,		
That euere regned in Roome the cite.	604	
His fadir callid, bookis determyne,		
Domycius, his moodir Agripyne.		
This Agripyna bi hir subtilite, —		She was subtle, and Fortune favourable; but what thing is more dreadful than cruel tyrants!
And blynde Fortune beyng fauourable,	608	
That set up tirauntes of froward volunte		
(Be ther demeritis thouh thei be nat hable)		

582. Eacus] Gacus R, J, Cacus P, H 5, Carus H, R 3.

583. Flageton B. 587. visage H. 589. languages R 3.

590. corages R 3.

595. atueen B.

599. onto] on H. 600. Oon] This Nero H.

607. hir] his H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 143 verso.

To estat imperial, famous & notable.
 What thing mor dredful, who can vnderstonde, 612
 Than cruel tirauntes with bloodi suerd on honde!

When Nero was twelve years old and had learned his grammar and the seven liberal arts, he was put in the hands of Seneca,

Whan this Nero of age was twelue yeer
 He was ordeyned in especiall,
 Afftir he hadde lernid his grameer 616
 And the seuene artis callid liberall,
 Vnto a maister in al vertu morall,
 Callid moral Senec, which did al his peyne
 From all vices his youthe to restreyne. 620

who kept him from all vices, knowing that his natural inclination was towards evil.

He kepte hym euere, this Senec, as I reede,
 Maugre his fatal disposicioun,
 Bi a constreynt & a maner dreede 624
 From al outrage and dissolucioun.
 Conseyued weel his inclynacioun
 To be vicious as of his nature,
 Which to restreyne he dede his besi cure.

When he was twenty-one years of age he married Octavia, daughter of Claudius and Messalina.

At oon & tuenti wyntir of his age, 628
 Cronicleers reheresen of hym thus:
 How he that tyme took in mariage
 Octovia, douhtir off Claudius, —
 Al this while beyng vertuuous, 632
 Whil Senec hadde hym vndir disciplyne, —
 His moodir-in-lawe callid Messalyne.

All this while Seneca kept him on the path of virtue; and when he was first crowned emperor he won the favour of the Senate.

The saide Senec made hym to desire 636
 To pursue kunnyng bi dilligent labour;
 At entryng in first of his empire, —
 I meene whan he was crownid emperour, —
 Of alle the Senat hadde gret fauour;
 And be report, as clerkis of hym write, 640
 In prose and metre he koude riht weel endite.

He wrote very well in both prose and verse, and made a notable book of poetry called *Lusce*.

In Iohn Bochas as it is maad[e] mynde,
 He dide excelle gretli in poetrye,
 Made in tho daies also, as I fynde, 644
 A book notable of straunge poisie,
 Lik as myn auctour of hym doth specesie,
 The title therof callid[e] *Lusce*,
 Ageyn a pretour Clodius Polle. 648

614. twelue] xij B.

618. vertu] werkes H. 629. Cronyclis H, Cronycles R 3.

637. in] om. R. 647. Luscio P. 648. Pollio P.

Excelled in musik & in armonye,
 Crownid with laureer for the beste harpou
 That was that tyme; & he did edefie
 In Roome a paleis, *witb* many a riche tour, 652
 Which in beeldyng coste gret tresour,
 The circuit beyng thre thousand pas;
 And Transitorie that paleis callid was.

He was also an excellent musician and the best harper of his time. He built a palace called Transitory

For this cause, as put is in memorie, 656
 The said[e] paleis aftirward was brent,
 Therfor it was callid Transitorie; —
 But aftir that, Nero in his entent
 Leet beelde an hous, bi gret auisement, 660
 To recompence the tothir that was old,
 And callid it the riche hous of gold.

because it burnt down soon afterwards, and a rich house of gold,

In al this world[e] was non to it liche, [p. 351]
 Wher that euer men did ride or gon, 664
 Tables of iuor fret with perre riche,
 Pileres of cristal garnished *witb* many a ston,
 Saphirs, rubies & topazion,
 Crisolitis & emeraudis greene, 668
 With plate of gold tiled that shon ful sheene.

to which none other was comparable, with its ivory tables, crystal pillars ornamented with precious stones, and gold-tiled roof.

To bodili lust* and delectacioun
 This said[e] Nero set al his desires;
 Gardyns, conduitis for recreacioun 672
 He dide ordeyne tendure many yeeris.
Witb nettis of gold fisshed in his ryueeris,
 His garnementis of golde & Ynde stonis,
 And neuer he wolde haue hem on but onys. 676

All his inclination turned to sensuality. He built gardens and artificial streams in which he fished with golden nets.

In his begynnyng, the stori doth deuise,
 Lord & emperour in Roome the cite,
 To senatours he gaf ful gret fraunchise,
 Graunted comouns many gret liberte; 680
 But in his most imperial dignite,
 Of froward wil left al good policie,
 And al attonis gaf hym to ribaudie.

His clothes were of gold and jewels, and he would never wear them but once.

670. lust] lustis B.

672. conductes R, J.

674. *is misplaced at end of stanza, but correction indicated R.*

678. in] in the R.

679. To] þe H.

- At first virtuous and liberal, he suddenly turned to ribaldry, left the company of old senators, and harped and sang among vagabonds and openly danced with common women at the brothel.
- In the course of time he fell into gluttony and incontinence, for one vice leads to another; but idleness was the cause of all.
- At Ostia he ordained tents for debauchery, housing cooks and taverners at great expense. Ladies who took part in these revels were not well spoken of afterwards.
- It is also said that this same Nero violated the priestesses of Vesta, who were vowed to chastity.
- One of them, Rubria, he dragged out of the temple and put in a bordel-house in spite of her being a nun.
- Men shall never read any writing of mine about his foul and outrageous deeds with Sporus and Ompharus,
- Of Grece and Egipt *with* dyuers io[n]glours, 684
 And among vileyns hymself[e] disporting,*
 Leste the presence of olde senatours
 And among ribaudis he wold harp & synge,
 Made comedies dishonestli sownyng, 688
 At the bordel dide hymself auauance
With comoun women openli to daunce.
 Thus be processe, to al vertu contrarie,
 Be gret excesse he fill in glotonye, 692
 And aftir that list no lenger tarye, —
 As euery vice to othir doth applie, —
 Surfet & riot brouht in lecherie;
 And ground of al, as cheef[e] porteresse, 696
 Texile vertu was froward idilnesse.
 Aboute the cite callid Hostience,
 Beside Tibre & othir fressh ryuers
 Dide ordeyne bexcessiff expence 700
 Tentis for riot, kookis, tauerneeris,
 And al the niht reuel aboute the feeris.
 Ladies komen, that wer afforn weel namyd,
 Bi suich fals riot wer aftirward diffamed. 704
 The same Nero be fals abusioun,
 It is reportid, his* stori who list see,
 Bi violence from ther religioun,
 Suich as hadde auowed chastite 708
 And wer professid to virgynyte
 In the temple of Vesta the goddesse, —
 Of froward lust he dide hem oppresse.
 Amongis which Rubria was oon: 712
 Maugre hir wil, she durste [it] nat denye,
 From the temple bilt of lym & ston
 Sacrid to Vesta, myn auctour list nat lie,
 He rente hir out to vse his lecherie; 716
 Nat*with*standyng she was religious,
 Made hir tabide at the bordel-hous.
 Be my writyng men shal neuer reede,
 The mateer is so foul & outragous 720
 To be rehersed, & the horrible deede
 Which Nero vsid whilom on Sporus
 And on another callid Ompharus:

684. Ioglers P. 685. disparting B, dispartynge R.
 698. Aboute] Aboue R. 706. his] the B. 707. ther] the R.
 723. Ompharus] Doriphorus P.

- Bothe male childre, as bookis telle can, 724
Them to transffoorme to liknesse of [wo]man.
- Somme bookis of hym determyne, and some
Lik a ribaude horrible & detestable, him, that like
He mysusid his moodir Agripyne, 728 a detestable
And lik a tiraunt cruel & vengable, — ribald, he had
Which to remembre it is abhominable, — his mother's
He made hir wombe be korue upon a day womb carved
To seen the place nyne monethes wher he lay. 732 open to see
where he had
lain for nine
months.
- Of disnaturel hatful cruelte,
To God nor vertu hauyng no reward,
And of the vice of prodigalite
He was accusid, in kniethod a coward, 736
And to al vertu contrarie & froward, —
Of whos woodnesse good heed whan I took,
I was ashamed to sette hym in this book.
- He hated alle that wer vertuous 740
And to hem hadde specialli envie;
His brethre, his wiff, this tiraunt despitous,
He falsli slouh in his malencolie;
His maister Senec, auctours specefie, 744
Ay whan he sauh hym, hauyng a maner dreede,
In an hot bath to deth he made hym bleede.
- Cristis feith[e] first he gan werreye, [p. 352]
Of emperours, in his froward entent; 748
Petir & Poule in Roome he made deie
Vpon a day; ther legende doth assente.
Half the cite of Roome, I fynde, he brente;
And senatour[e]s wol nih euerichon 752
This Nero slouh; spared almost neueroon.
- To Pollifagus, a wood man most sauage,*
Which that fedde hym most *with* flessch of man,
Nero took men, olde & yong of age, 756
To fynde hym vitaille in streetis wher he cam.
Cursid at his eende, cursid whan he gan,
Whan he did offre innocentes blood
To be deuoured of hym that ran so wood. 760

725. woman] man H, R, R 3, H 5, a man J, woman P.

749. in] & H.

752. wol nih] volneth R.

753. neueroon] noon H, R 3, none P.

754. *This stanza is transposed with the next in P and MSS. except H.*

760. ran] was H.

His mules were shod with silver for pride; and after he burnt Rome the people chased him from his suburban palace

Made his mules be shod with siluer shoone
Of surquedie, whan he shold[e] ride;
The cite brent. Romeyns aftir soone
Pursued hym upon eueri side; 764
And from a subarbe wher he dide abide,
Tween Salaria & Numentana riht,
Ther stant a path whidir he took his fliht.

to a deep marsh, and there, seeing himself trapped, he pierced his heart with a dagger. A cursed end!

Bi a deep maris as* Nero took his fliht, 768
Whan he sauh he myht[e] nat asterte, —
He was [so] pursued bi a Romeyn kniht
To fynde socour he myht[e] nat dyuerte, —
Rooff hymselff anon [un]to the herte 772
With a sharp dagger, a cursid eende, loo!
Of the fals tiraunt that callid was Nero.

Lenvoye.¹

No prince, should take pleasure in reading the story of Nero; it has to do only with murder, treason, adultery, excess, poison, riot, gluttony, lechery, vengeance, and suicide.

OFF this Nero to write[n] a Lenvoye,
Nor of his deedis to make mencion, 776
To ræde þe processe no prince shold haue ioye,
For al concludeth on moordre and on tresoun,
On auoutrye, excesse & poisoun,
Riot, glotonye, lecherie, vengauce, 780
Slauhtre of hymselff[e]; eendid with myschaunce.

If I could, I would scratch his name out of my book. Let no one remember anything more about him than this: that every tyrant ends in misfortune.

Yif that I myhte, I wolde race* his name
Out of this book, that no man sholde reede
His vicious lyf, cheef merour of diffame. 784
Set hym aside; let no wiht take[n] heede
For to remembre so many a cruel deede,
Sauf onli this, to thynken* in substauce,
How eueri tiraunt eendith with mischaunce. 788

What I say of him is said only in reproof.

Of hym I caste to write now* no more,
And what I seie is* seid but in repreff
Of the vices that he wrouht of yore
Duryng his empire, concludyng for a theeff. 792
Al tirannye shal eende with myscheeff,
Record on Nero, which for mysgouernaunce,
As ye haue herd[e], eendid with myschaunce.

768. as] whan B. 772. unto] even to H.

782. racen B, R, J.

783. reede] it reede R, J, P. 787. thynken] maken B.

789. to write now] now to write B. 790. is] I B.

794. on] of R.

¹ "In stede off a Lenuoie," R.

[How Eleazerus a Iewe born / for extorcioun and robbery / was brouht in prisoun and there ended.]¹

AFFTIR Nero *cam* Eleazarus,
A Iew of berthe, a prince of robberie,
An extursioneer cruel & despitous;
For his outrages doon in that partie,
To redresse his hatful tyrannye,
A myhti pretour sent fro Roome doun,
Callid Phelix, into that regeoun.

796 Eleazar, a Jew, came after Nero. He was a prince of robbery and a cruel extorcioner, but Felix came down from Rome

Be force of Phelix take he was & bounde,
Maugre his myht[e], onto Roome sent,
Strongli fetrid with massif cheynis rounde,
Suffred in prisoun many gret torment.
At the laste, this was his iugement,
Ther tabide because he was a theeff;
For euermore eendid in myscheeff.

800
804 and captured him and sent him to prison for life.

808

[How the hede of Galba was smyten of filled full of gold / and offred atte the Sepulcre of Nero.]²

¶ Tofor Bochas next *cam* Galba doun,
Which in Spayne did many knihtli deede.
Afftir the deth rehersed of Neroun
He stode in hope, this Galba, as I reede,
In thempire iustli to succede,
Parcel for knihtod, he hath *hym* so weel born,
And* for gret mariage which he had had befor.

812 Galba, who had done many a knightly deed in Spain, usurped the throne after Nero.

816

I fynde in Bochas rehersed in sentence,
He was disclaundrid of hatful vices thre;
He was cruel, contrarye to clemence,
Streiht in keepyng, geyn liberalite,
Vengable of herte, geyn mercy & pite, —
A thyng nat sittingyng onto cheualrie, —
Of custom youe to slouthe & slogardie.

820 He was a cruel, avaricious, revengeful and lazy man.

798. extorsioner R, R 3, extorcioner H, H 5, P.
802, 3. Felix R, H, J, R 3, H 5, P.
809. For euermore] For euer for euer more R.
816. And] As B, H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 144 verso.

² MS. J. leaf 144 verso.

He claimed
title to the
empire by his
adopted son,
but not long
afterwards his
head was
smitten off by
Otho

To occupie thempire he began, 824
Among[es] Romeyns took pecessioun,
Cleymyng a title bi oon Licynyan
That was his sone bi adopcioun.
But [anone] aftir for his presumpcioun, 828
Oon callid Oththo, a ful manli kniht,
Smet of his hed, wher it wer wrong or riht.

and filled with
gold by Patra-
bolus and
offered up to
the gods of
the lower
regions at
the sepulchre
of Nero.

This said[e] Galba, myn auctour writeth thus, [p. 353]
From his empire vnwarli pullid doun, 832
Hadde an emny callid Patrabolus,
The hed of Galba took in pecessioun,
Filde it with golde, made an oblacioun
At the sepulchre of Nero therwithal 836
To alle the goddis & goddessis infernal.

[How Ottho and Vitellius / for glotony lechery
ribaudrie and cruelte / ended in mischeef.]¹

After this
sacrifice, Piso
came to make
his complaint
to Bochas.
Surnamed
Licinian and
adopted son of
Galba, he was
slain by Otho.

¶ And after that this offryng was ful do,
As ye haue herd[e], to Iohn Bochas than
To make his compleynt in ordre cam Piso, 840
Affor surnamyd iustli Licynyan,
Sone adoptiff, to telle as I began,
Of saide Galba, cleymyng to succede,
Slayn anon aftir bi Ottho, as I reede. 844

The empire
was then di-
vided into
three and gov-
erned by Otho,
Vitellius, and
Vespasian.

Than was themp[i]re partid into thre:
Ottho took Roome vnto his partye;
And Vitellius to regne in the contre,
Ouer the boundis of al Germanye; 848
And Vespasian regned in Surrye.
But first this Ottho, surnamyd Siluyus,
Cam to compleyne, cruel and despitous.

Otho, whose
family name
was Siluius,
usurped the
empire by
murder and
outrage, and
began a war
against Vitel-
lius.

Of al thempire this same* Siluyus 852
Be slaughtre, rauyne & extorsioun,
Bi moordre, deth & deedis outraious
With myhti hond took ther pecessioun.
And ther began a gret deuysioun, 856

829. *The name Otho is spelled variously with c's and t's in the MSS.; it is probable however that the c's are usually meant for t's* (Occho R, R 3, Octho J, Ochocho B, H, Otho P).

833. Hadde] And R — Patrobolus R, H, J, R 3, H 5, Patro-
bius P.

836. sepulture H. 841. lycyvia H. 845. into] in R.
852. this same] surnamyd B.

¹ MS. J. leaf 144 verso.

Which was occasioun of gret sorwe & wo,
Atween Vitellius and this seid Otho.

It is rehersed, that in Germanye
In sondri placis thei hadde batailes thre,
In the which Otho *with* his partie
Venquished the feeld & maad his foon to flee.
But thoruh Fortunys mutabilite,
The fourte tyme, pleyⁿli this the caas,
Maugre his myht discourfited *per* he was.

860 He won three battles in Germany, but was defeated in a fourth battle,

Tofor Bedrye, a myhti strong cite
Of Germanye was this disconfiture.
Aftir which of froward cruelte
The said[e] Otho, seeyng his auenture,
With wo supprised miht[e] nat endure
Of his *constreynt* thymportable peyne;
Took a sharp suerd & roof his herte *on* tweyne.

864 and, overcome with despair, killed himself.

868

Vitellius hauyng the victorye,
With his poweer, as maad is mencion,
Of surquedie & fals[e] veynglorie,
Cam with his host[e] into Roome toun.
But Bochas heer maketh a descripcioun,
Rehersyng shortli his berthe & eek his lyne,
And how that he of blood was Saturnyne.

876 Vitellius came vaingloriously into Rome with his army;

This to seyne, Saturnyus, kyng of Crete,
Chacid bi Iubiter out of his regioun, —
And Ianus hadde in Itaille take his seete
Vpon a mount callid Ianiculun,
Wher now of Roome is bilt the large toun, —
Ianus resceyuyng of liberalite
Whan Saturn fledde, into his cite.

880 and Bochas says that he was descended from Saturn, whom Jupiter expelled from his kingdom. Saturn was received in Rome by Ianus,

884

Toforⁿ the komyng of Satvrn, this no faille,
Rud & boistous, & bestial of resoun
Was al the people abidyng in Itaille;
Lond was non sowe nor turnid up-so-down,
Nor marchaundise vsid in no toun
Til Saturn tauhte the maner of lyuyng,
Of tilthe & labour to Ianus that was kyng.

888 and before his coming the people were rude and unlettered and did not even know how to till the soil or chaffer in merchandise,

892

869. The] This R.

880. Saturnus P.

893. & labour] of londe H — to Ianus] om. R.

and were like
beasts until
Saturn taught
Janus the art
of living.

Afforn whos comyng, tofor as I you told,
Craft was non vsid be no creature,
Nor no beeldyng of housis newe [n]or old, 896
But lyued as beestis the[r] lyfode to recure,
Lik as thei wern Ilernid of Nature.
Thei koude tho daies make no cloth nor shape,
Off* frosti wedris the greuou cold tescape. 900

They could
not make
cloth, and were
very poor
cooks, and had
no markets in
their towns.

Thei wer nat besi be costful apparaille
Of sondry metis and confeccions,
Off dyuers drynkes & manyfold vitaille
To be corious to ther refeccions. 904
Marketis wer none in cites nor in touns;
No man with othir bouhte nouthor solde
Til Saturn cam & them the maner tolde.

But after
Saturn had
taught them
how to be
civilized, these
simple folk
worshipped
him as the
mightiest of
their gods.

And whan he hadde tauhte them þe maneere 908
And set an ordre of ther gouernaunce,
The symple peepel, as bookis doth vs lere,
Lich as to God dide ther attendaunce,
With certeyn rihtes to doon þer obseruaunce, 912
Worsheped hym, & aftir dide hym calle
Saturn, most myhti of ther goddis all.

Latinus was a
descendant of
Saturn and so
was Lavinia,
his daughter,
ancestress
of Vitellius.

[Aftyr this Saturne was made a pe-degre,
To sett an ordre conveied from his lyne 916
Descendyng down, the maneer who list see,
To oon Latynus and so foorth to Lavyne,
Which was his douhtir, as poetis determyne.
Thus bi discent from* Saturne and Funus, 920
Born off ther bloode cam Vitellius,]

The first
knight of the
lineage was
Vitellius Pub-
lius; and his
descendant,
Vitellius Lucius,
was father of
the emperor.

The firste kniht bor[e]n of that lynage. [p. 354]
Because he was manli & riht famous,
Hadde in armys prowesse & gret corage, 924
He callid was Vitill[i]us Publius;
And of hym cam Vitell[i]us Lucius,
Fadir to hym, myn auctour doth expresse,
Of whom that I haue gunne this processe. 928

900. Off] The B.

903. Off] to H.

910. The] Thei R, Ther J — doth] don R, J.

914. of] to H.

915. This stanza is supplied from R.

920. from] to R.

- D**YUERS stories remembre & pleyntli tell,
 Dvryng his youthe & stood at liberte,
 How þis forseid, that callid was Vitell,
 Was the most vicious that owher myhte be, 932
 Youe to ribaudie & al dishoneste,
 Because of which chaungid was his name,
 Callid Spyntoire, a name of gret diffame.
- I fynde that he was an hazardour,
 In al his werkis passyng riotous, 936
 For his surfetis gret *with* the emperour
 That whilom was callid Claudius.
 And for his deedis & maneeres outraious, 940
 For his gret wast and prodigalite
 Of gret dispence he fill in pouerte.
- Among his riotis [&] surfetis mo than oon
 Which he dide in contres heer & ther, 944
 I fynde that he for neede solde a ston
 Which his mooder bar whilom* at hir ere.
 For be old tyme was vsid, who list lere,
 Women that wern that tyme of hih degre 948
 Bar at ther eris stonis & perre.
- And bi the sellyng of that riche ston,
 For which that he resceyued gret tresour,
 Be sotil werkyng & sleihtis mo than oon 952
 He gat hym freendis & was maad emperour.
 And therwithal he dide eek his labour
 To resceyue another dignite,
 To be cheef bisshop in* Roome the cite. 956
- And in short tyme this Vitellius
 Of thempire took on hym al thestat,
 The suerd resceyued of Cesar Iulius,
 Vsed a garnement that was purpurat, 960
 Dempte of hymself he was most fortunat,
 Natwithstanding mor boldli þat tyme atte leste*
 Of Aliensois holden was the feeste.

It is said that this Vitell was one of the most vicious youths that ever lived, given to all dishonesty and called Spintor, an infamous name.

He was a gambler and a prodigal, and fell into poverty because of his excesses.

Finally he sold a stone his mother had worn at her ear (for in olden times women of high station wore jewelry in their ears),

and through the proceeds and his cunning he got himself friends and was made emperor. He also wanted to be chief bishop.

He received the sword of Julius Caesar, wore purple, and considered himself most fortunate.

941. and] of H.

946. his] is R — whilom bar B, bare sometyne H, bar some tym R 3.

956. in] of B.

958. al] om. R.

962. mor boldli þat tyme atte leste] þat tyme mor boldli at the leste B — þat tyme] om. H.

The feast of
Aliensois was
then being held,
during which
no one was
required to do
any virtuous
labour;

Aliensois was a solempnite 964
Among[es] Romeyns kept be daies olde,
In Frenssh myn auctour recordeth thus, parde,—
And in that tyme of custum no man sholde,
Nor be statut bounde was nor holde 968
To do no maner occupacioun
That touched vertu or religioun.

and bound up
with it was a
custom of
granting the
requests of all
people. So
Vitellius asked
to be bishop,
and no one
dared say no.

Duryng this feeste he sholde haue his axyng,
Bi a custum vsid in that cite. 972
And Vitellius, as emperour & kyng,
Axed that tyme another dignite,
To be cheef bisshop & haue auctorite
Of that estat, with poweer hool & pley[n]; 976
No man so hardi to replie ther ageyn.

He set all
wisdom and
knowledge at
nought and left
knighthood
and providence,
and gave him-
self up wholly
to idleness and
gluttony.

From al vertu Vitelli dide varye,
Set at nouht al wisdam & science, 980
Thouhte onto hym was nat necessarye
Kunnyng, kniithod, manhod nor prouidence;
Gaf hym onli to slouhthe & negligence,
To glotonye, folwyng his desir[e]s,
Wach al niht with drynk & resesoper[e]s. 984

As he was a
bishop he offi-
ciated in the
temple, and
often he would
cast aside the
censer and call
a kitchen boy
to the altar
and command
him to bring
him his dinner.

Beyng a bisshop of ther paynym lawe,
Lik Romeyn rihtis doying *per* seruise
Tofor the goddes; he wolde hymself withdrawe
And cast aside censer and sacrefise 988
And calle a boy in ful vngoodli wise,
A kichen boy, tofor the hih aulter,
And hym comaundid to brynge hym his dyneer!

Always
gluttonous and
drunk,

Beyng arrayed in his pontificall, 992
For the maner void of deuocioun,
Lik a ribaude, or lik a wood menstrall
Euer dronclew, & out of al sesoun,
Gorge upon gorge, this excessif gloutoun, 996
Moste idropik, drank ofte ageyn[es] lust:
The mor he drank the mor he was a-thrust.

970. vertu or] vnto R, onto J.

978. Vitell J, P.

979. at nouht] anouht R.

994. mynstrall H, R.

996. upon] vp R.

- This was a bisshop sacrid for* Sathan,
 And an emperour crownid with myschaunce: 1000
 Mor lik in poorte a beeste than a man.
 Vsed al his poweer in slauhtre & in vengauce;
 To sheede blood was set al his plesaunce,
 Takyng non heed nouthur of wrong nor riht; 1004
 And thus he wex hatful to eueri wiht.
- His soudiours forsook hym nih echon, [p. 355]
 In al parties bi hym wher thei wer sent; .
 Thoruh al the contres of Septemprion 1008
 And in al Surrye toward thorient,
 Of oon accord & alle of oon assent
 Echon forsook hym; with hym bood* nat a man,
 And becam seruauntes to Vespasian. 1012
- Vitellius sauh it wolde be non othir,
 And he for-feeble [of] dronknesse & outrage, —
 And sauh the poweer gan failen of his brothir,
 Whan he had sett* and signed the viage 1016
 Ageyn Vespasian to holden his passage:
 But al for nouht, bakward wente his partie,
 Stood dispeired of eueri remedie.
- Thus Vitellius vnhappi to the werris, 1020
 Lik a fordronke vnhappi gret glotoun,*
 Whos booste afforn[e] raut up to the sterris,
 Now al his pride in myscheef is come down,
 Fayn for tacorde to this conuencioun: 1024
 For litil tresour, which men sholde hym assigne,
 To Vespasian thempire to resigne.
- This was his promys, but he heeld it nouht:
 What he saide, his woord was neuer stable; 1028
 Certeyn flatereres chaungid hadde his thouht,
 And certeyn comouns, that euer be chaungable,
 Gaff hym counsail, saide hymself was hable
 To gouerne thestat imperial, 1032
 And non so hable for to rekenen al.

he was a bishop
 sacred to
 Satan, more
 like a beast
 than a man.
 As his pleasure
 lay most in
 shedding blood
 without heed
 to right and
 wrong, he was
 hated by all
 men.

His soldiers
 deserted him
 and entered
 the service of
 Vespasian.

Made weak by
 drink and ex-
 cess, and seeing
 that the ex-
 pedition he had
 sent against
 Vespasian had
 failed, he de-
 spaired,—

a great un-
 happy
 drunken
 glutton, and
 was glad to
 resign his im-
 perial dignity
 for a small
 compensation.

But when flat-
 terers told him
 that he
 was best able
 to govern
 Rome, he
 broke his
 promise

999. for] of B.

1011. boode nat with hym H — abood B.

1016. sett] sent B, R, J, R 3, H 5, P. 1019. dispeired R.

1021.] Lik afforn dronke vnhappi stronge glotoun B.

1024. this] his R.

1027. his] my H.

1030. that] be H.

- and began a new war out of presumption, and sent the head of Fabius, Vespasian's brother, who had been killed,
- First of Almayne he sent out soudiours,
And of presumpcioun a newe werre he gan.
Thoulte that he was among othir werreyours 1036
Hable to* filte ageyn Vaspasian.
And of auenture it befill so than,
In thes werris Vespasyanis brothir*
I-slay[e]n was; it wolde be non othir. 1040
- to Rome. After that he burnt down the Capitol and soon lost the favour of the Romans.
- This froward man callid Vitellius,
Vngracious euere founde in his entente,
Smet of the hed of seide Fabius,
Brothir of Vespasian, & it to Roome sente, 1044
And aftir that the Capitoile [he] brente.
But suyng on, *witbynne* a litil space
Among Romeyns he loste bothe hap & grace.
- Why should I write more of his debauchery?
His cook and pastryman did not forsake him; they followed him to the Campania.
- Of his riot what sholde I mor entrete? — 1048
For except riot of hym nothyng I reede.
His cook, his pastleer, folk that wer most meete
To serue his lust & appetites to feede,
Forsook hym nat, but went *with* hym in deede 1052
Toward Champayne riht as any lyne
Vp to an hill[e] callid Auentyne.
- Later on he returned to Rome, hoping to ingratiate himself with Vespasian. Seized at last in his palace, he denied his own name,
- Stondyng in hope, but that was but *in* veyn,
Of Vespasian the fauour to recure, 1056
Euene to Roome retournid is ageyn,
The paleis entrid; & ther hymself tassure,
Hauyng *with* hym non othir creature,
The gatis shet, which was to hym gret shame; 1060
Take at the laste, forsook his owne name.
- and was led half naked before the populace, his hands bound behind his back, looking like a madman.
- Halff naked he was & haluendel Iclad,
Al allone lik as he was founde.
So in the cite affor the peepel lad; 1064
Bothe his hondis behynde his bak wer bounde
With myhti cheynys & with ropis rounde.
Lik a wood man of look & of visage,
The peepel to hym hauyng this langage: 1068

1035. he] *om.* H.

1036. werreyours] Soudiours H.

1037. to] for to B, R, P, H 5, R 3, H.

1039, 40. *The second halves of these lines are transposed B.*

1043. the said R.

1044. of] vnto R.

1051. lustis H.

“O thou olde lecherous foul gloutoun,
 A verray coward, to al vertu contrarie,
 Cruel, vengable of thi condicioun,
 To euery goodman cruel aduersarye,
 To all cursid benigne & debonaire,
 Roote of al surfetis, hauyng ay delit
 To sewe & folwe thi lecherous appetit!”

1072

The people called him a coward, an enemy of every good man, a lecherous foul old glutton,

With such rebukis & castyng of ordure,
 With donge & clay was blottid his visage.
 In the presence of many a creature,
 With cordes drawen he was be gret outrage
 Vnto a place callid in ther langage,
 Ther most cheeff rakkes or galwes of þe toun,
 Wher is of custum doon execucioun.

1076

and threw dung in his face. He was then drawn with cords to the gallows.

1080

Summe remembre he slay[e]n was in haste,
 With sharp[e] suerdis dismembred on þe ground,
 His careyn aftir into Tibre cast
 With a large hook of iren, sharp & round,—
 No mor reuerencid than was a stynkyng hound.
 Remembryng heer myn auctour seith also
 Of this Vitellius, Galba & Ottho,

1084

and despatched with swords.

1088

They fastened his carrion to an iron hook and threw it into the Tiber; and no more respect was paid to him than to a stinking hound.

Affermyng thus, as for ther partie,
 Thei be namyd among the emperours,
 For a tyme thestat did occupie;
 And first this Galba, be record of auctours,
 Deide at myscheeff, void of al socours,
 Eihte monethes regned as lord & sire,
 And aftir that cast out of his empire.

[p. 356]

1092

Thus, to recapitulate: Galba died in misfortune, cast out of his empire after a reign of eight months;

1096

The thridde moneth, as maad is menciou[n],
 Ottho deide, proude & ambicious.
 And, as I fynde, the domynacioun
 Laste eihte monethes of Vitellius.
 And for thei wern proud ribaudes* lecherous,
 Cruel, vengable, born of cursid lyne,
 In wrechchidnesse echon thei dide fyne.

1100

Otho died in the third month of his reign; and Vitellius reigned eight months. As they were all proud dissolute ribalds, they ended in misery.

1074. ay] evir H.

1078. a] om. R, H.

1087. a] om. H.

1089. Galba] of Galba R.

1101. ribaudes] ribaudi B, P, R, ribaudie J — & lecherous H.

Bochas dampnyth þe Vice of Glotonye.¹

Bochas, seeing the great iniquity of this froward company, took up his pen to condemn the vice of gluttony.

HEER Iohn Bochas seyng the gret offense 1104
 Of this forseid froward companye,
 Took his penne of enteer dilligence,
 And in his studie gan hymselff applie
 To dampne the vice of hatful glotonye, 1108
 Fro which[e] synne, record[e] of Adam,
 Al our myscheeuys & sorowis cam.

All our sorrows arose from it, as witness Adam, who in his folly and conceit allowed himself to be governed by a serpent.

Be the outrage of disobeissaunce,
 Our said[e] fadir beyng in paradys, 1112
 Tween hym and vertu ther roos a gret distaunce,
 Cleerli conceyued, he that was so wis,
 Aboue creatures be resoun bar the pris,
 Til [he] of foli wrongli gaff assent 1116
 To be gouernid bi a fals serpent.

His innate virtues forsook him and returned to heaven, and for this we have great reason to mourn.

His innat vertues did hym anon forsake
 For his assentyng, & did in hast retourne
 Ageyn to heuene, whan the infernal snake 1120
 In stede of vertu did with man soiourne.
 For which we han gret mateer for to mourne,
 Sith that we been diffourmyd in certeyn,
 Be vicious lyuyng of vertu maad bareyn. 1124

Our vices became dominant, assailing us woeful wretches, when we abandoned the four virtues,

And thus cam in the domynacioun
 Of vices alle, & heeld a gret bataille,
 The reteny sent from thynfernal dongoun,
 Vs woful wrechchis in erthe for tassaille, 1128
 Strechchyng ther poweer, & proudli gan preuaille
 Thoruh al the world[e] & pecessioun took,
 For our demerites whan vertues vs forsook.

Prudence, Temperance, Rihteousnes, and Fortitude.

Thes said[e] vertues comprised in the noumbre 1132
 Of foure reknid: Prudence, Attemperaunce,
 Of* vicious lyff tadawed vs fro the slombre,
 Rihtwisnesse taue holde the ballaunce,
 And Fortitudo of ther alliaunce; 1136
 Whan thei forsake mankynde to gouerne,
 Than of al vertu was clipped the lanterne.

1114. he that] þat he H. 1115. be resoun] om. R.

1125. thus] om. H.

1134. Of] Fro B, J, H 5, R 3, From R, P.

¹ The heading is as follows in MS. J. leaf 146 recto: "Here Bochas ageyne Glotonye compleyneth seieng as it folowith."

- Thus thoruh dirknesse vices wer made bold,
The multitude almost innumerable. 1140
Amonges all reknid of newe or old,
Ther be foure pereilous & reprouvable:
Slouthe, Lecherye, & most abhominable,
Fals Auarice bi a gredi desir, 1144
With Glotonye, cheef kyndeler of ther fyr.
- Nature in soth with litil is content;
And as myn auctour abidith heer a while,
And to remembre was sumwhat dilligent 1148
To write, whan Saturn regned in þe ile
Callid Crete, the prophetesse Cibile,
In hir tyme, bi gret auctorite,
The world deuyded prudentli in thre. 1152

[A Chapitle descryuyng the golden worlde, that is
to say whan attemperaunce had hooly the
gouernaunce.]¹

- THE olde world, whan Saturn was first kyng,
Regnyng in Crete in his roial estat,
Noe, Abraham be vertuous lyuyng
Caused erthli folk to be most fortunat, 1156
The world tho daies callid Aureat;
For sobirnesse and attemperaunce
Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.
- Ther was that tyme no wrong nor violence, 1160
Envie exiled from eueri creature,
Dissolucioun & dronken insolence,
Ribaudie & al swich foul* ordure,
Froward surfetis, contrarye to nature, 1164
Ibanshed wern, because attemperaunce
Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.
- Youthe was bridled vnder disciplyne, [p. 357]
Vertuous studie floured in myddil age, 1168
Dreed heeld the yerde of norture* & doctrine,
Riot restreynd from surquedous outrage,
Hatful detraccioun repressid his langage,

1145. ther] þe H. 1149. ysle R, Isle H.

1163. foul] fals B, H.

1165. wern] was R — Ibanysshid H.

1169. norture] nature B.

¹ MS. J. leaf 146 verso. *There is no initial in B.*

- Kouth was charite, because attemperance 1172
 Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.
- Chastity was
 cherished by
 knighthood,
 heretics were
 punished, and
 the church held
 up in spiritual
 dignity.
- Fortitudo stood tho in his myht,
 Diffendid widwes & cherished chastite,
 [Knythod in prowesse gaff out so cleer a liht,] 1176
 Girt with his suerd of trouthe & equyte,
 Heeld up the cherch in spiritual dignite,
 Punshed heretikes, because attemperance
 Had in that world hooli the gouernaunce. 1180
- Jurors were
 honest,
 promises were
 kept, for-
 swearing and
 lying dared
 enter no town.
- Rihtwisnesse chastised al robbours
 Be egal ballaunce of excusioun,
 Fraude, fals meede put bakward fro iorours,
 Trewe promys holde made no dilacioun, 1184
 Forsueryng shamyd, durste entre in no toun,
 Nor lesyngmongers, because attemperance
 Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.
- The seven
 deeds of mercy
 were con-
 stantly per-
 formed; the
 rich ready to
 give alms, and
 no one was
 refused a lodg-
 ing for the
 night.
- That golden world coude loue God & dreede, 1188
 Alle the seuene deedis of mercy for to vse;
 The riche was redi to do almessedeede:
 Who asked herborwe, men dide hym nat refuse.
 No man of malis wolde othir tho accuse, 1192
 Diffame his neihbour, because attemperance
 Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.
- Merchants and
 artisans were
 upright, the
 plow was held
 firmly to the
 furrow, the
 labourer was
 never idle.
- The trewe marchaunt be mesour bouhte & solde,
 Deceit was non in the artificeer, 1196
 Makyng no balkis, the plough was treuli holde,
 Abak stood idilnesse ferr from* laboreer,
 Discrecioun marchall at dyneer &* sopeer,
 Content with mesour, because attemperance 1200
 Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce.
- There was no
 luxurious ex-
 cess in cloth-
 ing (although
 one could
 know the lord
 from his sub-
 ject); no one
 boasted or
 feigned.
- Of wast in clothyng was that tyme non excesse,
 Men myhte the lord from his soget knowe,
 A difference maad tween pouert & richesse, 1204
 Tween a princesse & othir stasis lowe,
 Of hornyd beestis no boost was than Iblowe,
 Nor countirfet feynyng, because attemperance
 Hadde in that world hooli the gouernaunce. 1208

1176. B has in place of this line the third of the preceding stanza. — a] om. R.

1179. Punysshed R, H. 1183. bakward] bak H.

1188. That] The H.

1198. from] from the B, H. 1199. &] & at B.

1201.] Was set asyde and lost hir gouernaunce R.

1206. was then no boste R.

- This goldene world long while did endure,
Was non allay in that metal seene,
Til Saturn cesid, be record of scripture;
Iubiter regned, put out his fadir cleene,
1212 *Changed Obrison into siluer sheene,*
Al up-so-down, because attemperau[n]ce
Was set aside and lost hir gouernaunce.
- Of Martis myneral the metal is so strong,
1216 *Inflexible and nat malliable,*
Be sturdynesse to do the peple wrong
With rigerous suerd, fureous & vengable,
The merciful gold [of] Phebus nat plicable 1220
To haue compassioun, because attemp[e]raunce
Was set aside & lost hir gouernaunce.
- Leed, of philisophres, is callid gold leprous,
Tyn of Iubiter, crasshyng & dul of soun,
1224 *Fals and fugitiff is mercurivs, —*
The moone is mutable of hir condicioun.
The goldene world is turnid up-so-down
In ech estat, sith[en] attemperau[n]ce 1228
Was set aside and lost hir gouernaunce.
- Be Cibilis exposicioun,
Tak of this metal the moralite:
The goldene world was gouerned be resoun,
1232 *The world of iren was furious cruelte;*
The moone is mutable, ful of duplicite,
Lik to this world, because attemp[e]raunce
Is set aside and hath no* gouernaunce.* 1236
- Venus, of loueres emperesse & queene,
Of vicious lustis lady and maystresse,
Hir metal coper, that wil ternyssh grēne,
A chaungable colour, contrarye to sadnesse,
1240 *A notabil figur of worldli brotilnesse,*
Lik gery Venus, because attemp[e]raunce
Was set aside & lost hir gouernaunce.

This Golden World lasted until Jupiter put his father out of his kingdom, and then temperance was set aside.

The metal of Mars is strong and inflexible, and the sword of rigour furious and full of vengeance.

Lead is called leprous gold, tin is dull of sound, and mercury false and fugitive.

The Golden World was governed by reason, but the world of iron by cruelty; the present world is full of duplicity, like the moon.

Venus' metal is copper, that tarnishes green, a changeable colour, a figure of worldly mutability.

1222. hir] his H, R 3.

1223. Leed] Bed H.

1224. craishyng R, J.

1227. The] This R. 1228. sith H, R.

1236. Is] Was B — hath no] lost hir B.

1243. hir] his H.

- My author
Bochas com-
plained on the
cumbrous
gluttony of
Vitellius and
his two fellow
emperors,
notorious for
their debauch-
cry.
- Myn auctour Bochas gan pitousli compleyne 1244
On the disordynat comerous glotonye
Of Vitellius & his felawes tweyne,
Alle thre diffouldid with horrible lecherye,
Diffamed be sclandre, noised for ther ribaudie,* 1248
Contrarious ennyes echon tatemperaunce,
Banshed fro ther court[es], myhte haue no govern-
aunce.
- Gluttony and
drunkenness
cause fevers,
podagra, gout
and horrible
gangrenous
sores.
- Of glotonie & riotous excesse, [p. 358]
Wach & reuel & drynkyng al the niht 1252
Kometh vnkouþ feueres & many gret accesse,
Membres potagre mak[th] men thei go nat riht,
Goutes, mormalles horrible to the siht,
Many infirmytes, because attemperaunce 1256
Was nat of counsail toward ther gouernaunce.
- Prudence was
banished from
their court;
sobreness,
truth and
righteousness
stood aside.
- Out of ther court ban[y]shed was prudence,
Fortitudo had non interesse
Geyn vicious lyuyng to make resistence, 1260
Cried woluis hed was vertuous sobirnesse;
Trouthe durst nat medle, abak stood rihtwisesse,
Put out of houshold was attemperaunce,
With these thre emperours koude haue no gouernaunce.
- John the Bap-
tist lived in
the desert
and ate mel
sylvester and
locusts.
His cook was
temperance.
- ¶ Sone of the prophete callid Zacharie, 1265
The patriark, the holi man Seynt Iohn,
Victorious champioun of gredi glotonye,
Lyued in desert, deyntes hadde he non, 1268
Et mel siluestre, lay on the colde ston,
Locustas gadred; his cook was temp[e]raunce
And of his houshold had al the gouernaunce.
- His clothes
were woven of
camel's hair,
and he lived
on honey-
suckles and
drank spring
water.
- Of kamel heris was wouen his clothyng, 1272
Record the Gospell that kan the trouthe tell,
Honsyokeles his moderat feedyng,
Mong wilde beestis whan he dide duell;
To staunche his thrust drank watir of þe well, 1276
This blissid Baptist, roote of attempraunce,
Set for cheff merour of al good gouernaunce.

1245. comberous H.

1248. be] with H — for ther ribaudie] be þer lecherye B —
for ther] with H.

1254. podagre R, R 3, P. 1261. Cryed woluyssh was H 5.

1264. Emperour H. 1266. holi] manly H.

1269. Et mel siluestre] Did eat wild honey P.

1270. Locustes P. 1275. Mong] Among H.

- Of his diete catour was scarsete,
 His costful foode was vertuuous abstinence, 1280
 Rootis of desert his delicat plente,
 His riche pymentis, [his] ipocras of dispense
 Heeng nat in costretis nor botelis in þe spence, —
 Nat excessiff, because attemperauce 1284
 Hadde of his houshold hooli þe gouernaunce.
- Thus Baptist Iohn bi his moderat foode
 The cheef tryumphe of abstynence hath begunne,
 This patriark[e] rekned oon the goode, 1288
 Content with litil, al suffisaunce hath wonne,
 As Diogenes in his litil tonne
 Heeld hym appaied, because attemperauce
 Hadde of his houshold al the gouernaunce. 1292
- His tonne to hym was receipt & houshold;
 And yif I sholde booste of his celeer,
 Ther wer no cuppis of siluer nor of gold;
 His costful vyntage *cam* fro the ryueer: 1296
 Weel tymed mesour was for his mouth botleer,
 And his tastour was attemperauce,
 Which of his houshold had al þe gouernaunce.
- His conquest was mor souerayn of degre 1300
 Than Alisaundris, for al his hih renoun;
 For he conquered his sensualite,
 Made hym soget & seruauant to resoun,
 Daunted of prudence ech foreyn passioun, 1304
 His clerk of kechene callid attemperauce,
 Which of his diete had al þe gouernaunce.
- Of superfluite, of slouthe & of sleepe
 This Diogenes stood euer among in dreede; 1308
 Of worldli fauour he took no *maner* keepe;
 Strauh was his liteer, a symple russet weede:
 Turnid his tonne ageyn the wynd in deede,
 Tween hot and cold[e], that attemperauce 1312
 In somer & wyntir had hool the gouernaunce.

Scarcity was his caterer, and his food virtuuous abstinence and roots of the desert.

He began by moderate diet, the chief triumph of abstinence, and was as content with little as Diogenes in his hogthead,

who had no cellar or cups of silver and gold. His vintages came from the river, and moderation was his butler.

His conquest of his senses was greater than the triumphs of Alexander.

His bed was of straw, his garment russet; and he turned his tun according to the wind, and let temperance rule in summer and winter.

1281. his] he H.
 1283. nat] *om.* R.
 1297. his mouth] þe tyme H.
 1313. hool] *om.* R.

¶ Lenvoye.

Noble Princes,
The Golden
World is turned
to lead. Pray
God to send
down his grace,
that temper-
ance may
govern your
households.

NOBLE Princis, of prudence takith heed
This litil chapitle breefli to *comprehende*:
The goldene world is turnid into led; 1316
Praieth to God his grace down to sende
Of his hih mercy, that it may soone amende,
And that this princesse callid *attemperaunce*
May of your housholdis han the *gouvernaunce*. 1320

Chiefly for love,
but also for
fear, attend
diligently to his
precepts; for
those who of
old ruled by
temperance
prospered.

Cheeffi for loue, parcel eek for dreed,
In your estat whan ye be most shynende,
For your ences & your most gracious speed,
To his preseptis doth dilligenti attende, 1324
Of olde emperour[e]s reedeth the legende:
Whil thei wer reuled be *attemperaunce*
In long prosperite stood ther *gouvernaunce*.

While temper-
ance and her
three sisters
held sway, Rome
defied its
enemies.

Of worldli kyngdames Roome is callid hed, 1328
Whos roial boundis ferthest out extende
In marcial actis, bothe in lengthe & breed,
Rem Publicam bi prowesse to diffende,
No foreyn enmy hardi to offende 1332
Ther hih noblesse, whil *attemp[e]raunce*
Witb hir thre sustren hadde* ther *gouvernaunce*.

[How the kynrede of Iacob was destroyed / Crist
born and deied / Ierusalem destroyed, & xj^c M^l
slayn bi suerde, hunger, fire & pestilence.]¹

After the stories
of Vitellius,
Galba and
Otho, a great
number of the
descendants of
Jacob came to
Bochas

THE stori eendid of Vitellyus, [p. 359]
Of his too feeris Galba & Ottho, 1336
How his careyn horrible & hidous,
Drownid in Tibre, was possid to & fro.
Aftir the[r] stori [a]complissed was & do,
Cam gret noumbre to Bochas, as I reede, 1340
Echon descendid of Iacobis hih kynrede.

like dismayed
people, clad in
mourning and
wet with tears.

In tokne of compleynt & of heuynesse,
Lik folk dismaied, clad in moornyng weede,
For the constreynt of ther wrechidnesse, 1344

1314. goode heede R.

1316. The] This R — into] in R. 1319. thes prynces R.

1323. &] & for H. 1334. hadde] hadden B.

1337. their Careyns H. 1338. was] om. H.

1342. tokne] toke H — 2nd of] om. H.

1343. dismaied] diffamyd R.

¹ MS. J. leaf 147 verso.

- Bespreynt with teres, quakyng in þer dreede,
 Cunnyng no recour in so streit a neede,
 Resemblyng folk be toknis ful mortall
 That wer toward sum* feeste funerall. 1348
- Ther ougli cheeris pitous to beholde,
 As thei gan aprochen the presence
 Of Iohn Bochas to telle ther sorwes olde,
 Ther woundis bleedyng, be marcial violence, 1352
 Oppressid with hunger, thrust, sodeyn pestilence,
 Be foreyn suerd ther lyuys manacyng,
 Vpon the deth as beestis abidyng,
- That wer enclosed narwe in a folde, 1356
 Disespeired socour to recure,
 To passe ther boundis for dreded thei wer nat bold,
 Withynne enfamyne[d], bareyn of al pasture; —
 This woful stori remembrid in* scripture, 1360
 How that of Iacob the generacioun
 Was vengabli brouht to dest[r]ucciouun.
- This patriark callid whilom Israel,
 Most rennommed among al naciouns 1364
 And most famous, the Bible can weel tell,
 Ther lyne out reknid thoruhout al regiouns,
 Be goddis beheste took ther pecessiouns,
 Maugre Egipcians & Pharaoes pride, 1368
 Whan duk Moises be God was maad þer guide.
- With dreye feet thei passed the Rede Se,
 Conueyed be Moises & also be Aaron.
 Ther lawe was write, the Bible who list see, 1372
 Vpon Syna in tables of hard ston.
 And thoruh desert as thei dide gon,
 With aungelis mete callid manna, as I reede,
 Fourti wyntir ther he did hem feede. 1376
- Afftir Moises, lad be Iosue
 Into the lond[e] of promyscioun,
 The tuelue lynages of Iacob ther, parde,
 He leet make a distribucioun, 1380
 And to ech lyne he gaff his porcioun,
 Bi promys maad afforn to Habraham,
 To Isaak, Iacob, whan thei thidir cam.

1346. Cunnyng] knowyng J, P, H 5.

1348.] Toward that wer sum feeste funerall R — sum] the B.

1360. in] be B.

1367. pecessioun H. 1382. Abraham H, R, J.

- Ruled by
mighty dukes
and judges;
they prospered;
and at last,
when in their
pride they
wanted a king,
Saul was
chosen.
- Bi patriarkes [&] prophetis that wer sad, 1384
Maugre ther ennyes & ther mortal foon,
Be mihti dukes & iuges thei wer lad,
Gat al the regiouns wher thei dide gon,
Til at the laste, of pride thei echon 1388
Lik othir naciouns wolden haue a kyng.
Saul was chose; God grauntid þer asking.
- Finally David
became king,
and of his line
Jesus was born.
- Thus be patriarkes & be ther allies,
From Abraham the gen[e]alogie, 1392
Tolde be prophetis & be ther prophesies,
Conueied to Daud, which in his regalie
Heeld of Iewes al hool the monarchie,
Of whos kynreede bi processe, thus it stood, 1396
Was Crist Iesu born of that roial blood.
- who became in-
carnate for our
salvation and
suffered martyr-
dom under
Herod.
- Sent from his fader, as prophetis* determyne,
Took flesh & blood for our sauacioun,
Be the Hooli Goost born of a peur virgyne, 1400
Hadde among Iewes gret tribulacioun,
Vndir Herodes suffrid passioun,
And as the Gospell treuli doth descryue,
The thridde day [he] roos fro deth to lyue. 1404
- This blessed
Lord was born
at the end of
December in
Bethlehem, and
shewn to three
kings by a
starbeam; and
the same Jesus
was afterwards
condemned by
Pilate to die on
Calvary.
- This blissid Lord, this Lord of most vertu,
Eende of Decembre born [sothly] in Bethlem,
And be the aungel namyd was Iesu,
Shewed to thre kynges bi a sterre bem, — 1408
This same Ihesus in Iherusalem
Bi conspiracioun of Iewes thoruh envie,
Be Pilat dempt to deie on Caluarie.
- Thus the
Jews were
unkind to him;
and for that
they were
nearly all de-
stroyed.
- Thus onto Ihesu Iewes wer vnkynde, 1412
For which thei wern destroyed nih echon.
Crist prophecied, the Gospel maketh mynde,
How of ther cite ther shold nat leue a ston
Vpon another; for ther mortal foon 1416
Shold hem besege, he told hem so certeyn,
And make Iherusalem with the soil al pleyn.
- Sin was the
cause; for when
Jesus came to
save them, they
did not know
him.
- With weepyng eyen Crist told hem so beform* [p. 360]
Of ther ruyne and destruccioun; 1420
Synne was cause sothli that thei wer lorn:
For thei nat* knew, to ther confusioun,

1384. &] *om.* R. 1392. *genelogie* R, *genologie* J, *Genealogye* H.
1398. *prophetis]* *poetis* B. 1407. *the]* *om.* R.
1419. *beform]* *alform* B. 1420. *and]* & their H.
1422. *nat]* *ne* B.

- Tyme of ther notable visitacioun,
 Whan Crist cam down, born heer in erthe lowe 1424
 For ther sauacioun, — thei list hym nat to knowe.
- Thretti yeer ful cronicleeres write
 And sumwhat mor, aftir his passioun,
 Among the Iewes, pleyntli to endite, 1428
 Withynne hem-silff fill a dyuysioun.
 Moordrers ros up withynne ther owne toun,
 So gret a noumbre, with many an homycide,
 That in ther cite no man durst weel abide. 1432
- Ther presidentis regnyng in Iude
 Seyng this horrible foul rebelloun
 And of moordreris the mortal cruelte
 That long endured in that regeoun, — 1436
 Which for tappese Romeyns sente down
 Vespasian with many a manli kniht,
 Which into Gallile took his weie riht.
- And to chastise tho moordreris & robbours,
 Brente ther contre as he rood up & down, 1440
 So contynued with his soudiours
 Til onto tyme the contres environ
 Of Iherusalem entred be the toun 1444
 With ther oblaciouns in many sondri wise,
 As Pask requered, to do ther sacrefise.
- Tofor tho daies was Iherusalem
 Hadde in gret worshep of al naciouns, 1448
 Callid princesse of eueri othir rewme,
 Whos fame strechid thoruhout al regiouns,
 Ther tresor gret and ther pociounis,
 Double wallid, of beeldyng most notable, 1452
 Dreedyng non enmy, for it was impreuable.
- Among Romeyns was many a manli man
 Willyng echon of oon affeccioun,
 Thoruh the knihthod of Vespasian, 1456
 Echon to labour to the destruccioun
 Of Iherusalem; for gret dyuysioun
 Among hem-silff was gunne in the cite
 Bi certeyn capteyns wer in noumbre thre. 1460

Thirty years
 after the Pas-
 sion the Jews
 became divided
 among them-
 selves, and
 there were so
 many murders
 that no man
 dared abide in
 the city.

The Romans
 sent down
 Vespasian to
 restore order,

and he laid
 waste the
 country at the
 time the people
 entered Jerusa-
 lem to make
 their paschal
 sacrifices.

Jerusalem was
 then called the
 princess of
 realms, rich in
 treasure,
 double walled,
 and almost
 impregnable.

The Romans
 were willing to
 fight hard to
 win the city,
 which was
 divided against
 itself.

1425. to] *om.* H.

1426. yeer] yeers R — cronicleeres] cronyclis H, cronycles R 3,
 cronyculeers R, J. 1430. vp ros R. 1431. an ombre H.

1432. ther] that R, the J, P — weel] *om.* R.

1439. Gallile] Gaule H. 1451. Ther] The R. 1458. gret] their H.

The tyrants
Simon, John
and Eleazar
were enemies;
and there was
war both with-
out and within.

Symon, Iohn and Eleazarus,
Horrible tirauntes oppressing þe poraille,
Of gouernaunce froward and outraious,
Falsli deuided ech othir dide assaille, 1464
Among hem-silf had many gret* bataille:
Werre withoute & werre was withynne;
Thus of vengauunce myscheef dide gynne.

Vespasian tried
to make peace
among them,
but in vain.
Returning to
Rome as em-
peror,

Vespasian nat beyng rek[c]les, 1468
For his partie lik a prudent kniht
Be notable menys excited hem to pes;
But al for nouht; blente ther owne siht;
To cheese the beste thei koude nat seen ariht. 1472
And in this while, this noble werreyour
Vespasian was chosen emperour.

he appointed
his son Titus
to succeed him
in Judaea.
Jerusalem was
besieged
and starved.

Bi Alisandre to Roome he went ageyn,*
Resceyued ther thymperial dignite. 1476
His son Titus he made his cheef capteyn,
His procuratour, to gouerne in Iude,
Besette envircoun Iherusalem the cite,
With men of armys seged it so aboute 1480
That non myhte entre nor non myhte issen oute.

One woman is
said to have
roasted her
child for lack
of victuals,
which was too
horrible a deed!

Stopped ther conduites & ther watris cleer,
Enfamyned hem for lakkyng of vitaille.
A certeyn woman, thus seith the cronicleer, 1484
Rosted hir child whan vitaille did[e] faille, —
She hadde of stoor non othir apparaille, —
Theron be leiseer hirsilf she dide feede,
Which in a woman was to horrible a deede! 1488

The walls were
beaten down by
engines and
two strong
towers taken.

Ther myhti wallis *with* gunnes wer cast doun,
Too stronge tour[e]s take of ther cite,
Resistance gan faillen in the toun,
Thei stood of hunger in swich perplexite. 1492
Titus of knihthod and magnanymyte,
Thoruhout the tour callid Antonyan
Is entrid in lik a knihtli man.

1464. ech] echon H.

1465. gret] strong B.

1469. prudent] manly H.

1472. seen] chese H.

1473. noble] notable H.

1475. went ageyn] was sent B. 1483. lak H.

1485. vitailles R.

- The peep^{le} in streetis lay for hunger ded, 1496 The people lay
 To beye nor selle no lyfflode in the toun; dead for
 Ther was no* socour nouth^{er} of drynk nor bred hunger in the
 In peyne of deth born nouth^{er} up nor down. streets: their
 Vomyt of oon was the refeccioun story can
 Vnto another; ther was such scarsete, be read in
 Who redeth Iosephus, the trouthe he* may þer see. Iosephus.
- Brent was the temple maad first be Salamon, [p. 361] The temple,
 Which had endured, thus writ the cronicleer, 1504 which had
 That was so roial bilt of riche ston, stood for 1200
 Fulli a thousand & too hundred yeer. years, was
 Romeyns entred maugre ther porteer burnt
 With spere, pollex & suerdis sharp[e] whette, 1508
 Lik wode leouns slouh whom that thei mette.
- Ther riche gatis curid with plate of gold together with
 Wer brente and molte withoute excepcioun; its rich gates
 The siluer images that forgid wer of old, covered with
 The violent feer made hem renne down. 1512 plates of gold,
 Noble Titus hadde compassioun, and its silver
 His marcial dukis spared nothyng certeyn, images.
 List of presumpcioun thei wolde* rebelle ageyn. 1516
- Eleuene hundrid thousand wer ther slayn 1,100,000
 Bi suerd, bi hunger, fyr and pestilence; Jews were
 Stynk of kareyns that in streetis layn slain by the
 Caused of deth most sodeyn violence; sword, starva-
 And Titus gaff among hem this sentence 1520 tion, fire, and
 — I meene of them that dide alyue duell — pestilence; and
 For a peny men sholde thretti sell. the stink of
 corpses caused
 many more
 deaths.
- So as Judas sold Crist for thretti pens, 1524 Titus com-
 Titus ageyn thouhte of equite, manded the
 Of marchaundise to make recompense, survivors to be
 Thretti Iewes founde in the cite sold to the
 For a peny, & for no mor, parde, Saracens at
 Thei to be sold for ther gret outrage, 1528 thirty for a
 Euer among Sarsyns to lyuen in seruage. penny, as Jesus
 had once been
 sold by Judas
 for thirty
 pence.
- Of the temple a preest that was ful olde, An old priest
 Too statli lanternis, that wer ful briht & sheene, 1532 shewed Titus
 Tables, basynes, violes of briht golde the treasures
 He presented; & thus he dede meene: of the temple
 in token of its
 departed glory;
1498. no] non B, R. 1499. nouth^{er}] neithir R — nor] ne H.
 1502. Iosephus] Ioseph R — he] ye B, R, om. J — þer] om. J.
 1505. riche ston] lyme & stoone H. 1510. Ther] The H.
 1516. wolde] list B. 1518. 2nd bi] & H. 1525. of] it H.

- That ther tresour sholde weel be seene
Of the temple & shewed to Titus 1536
In tokne it was whilom so glorious.
- he shewed also
silk and frankin-
cense and the
purple vest-
ments and rich
pectoral of the
high priest.
- To shewe eek ther he dede his besi cure,
Silk synamome, franc-ensens withal,
For sacrefise the purpurat vesture, 1540
With Thymyame, the riche pectoral,
Which ordeyned wern in especial
For the solempne place of placis all,
Sancta sanctorum, & so men dide it call. 1544
- A prince of the
city named
John came to
Titus, pale with
hunger; and
Simon was
brought to him
by duke
Terence.
- Of the cite a prince callid Iohn
To Titus cam & shewed his *presence*,
Pale for hunger; ther cam also Symon,
Brouht be a duk that namyd was Terence, 1548
Clad in purpil, brouht be violence,
Resceyued of Titus whan this noble toun,
Castellis, tours & wallis wer smet down.
- Eleazar fled;
but, trapped
in a castle, he
incited all who
were with him
to slay one
another.
- Into a castell callid Mazadan 1552
Eleazarus hadde take his fliht.
Besegid of Seilla or he the castel wan,
This Eleazar lik a furious kniht
Withynne the castell the silue same niht 1556
Sterid eueri man, fadir, child & brothir,
With sharp[e] suerdis ech man to slen othir.
- Thus Jerusalem,
most stately of
building, was
destroyed.
- Thus was this* cite, most statli of beeldyng,
That whilom was of this world cheef toun, 1560
Wher Melchisedek regned, preest & kyng,
Be daies olde, as maad is mencionn,
Restorid be Dauyd, bilt newe of Salamoun,
Princesse of prouynces, was nowher* such anoþer; 1564
Now is it* abiect and refus of al othir.
- Jesus gave the
Jews thirty
years respite
before he took
vengeance; for
the Lord has
joy when
sinners are con-
trite and repent:
- Vnto the Iewes Crist Iesus gaf respiht,
Full thretti yeer[e] or he took vengeance, 1568
In tokne the Lord hath ioie & gret delite,
Whan that synneres dispose hem to penaunce
Be contricioun and hertli repentaunce.
This blissid Lord, this Lord most merciable
Lengest abideth or he list be vengable. 1572

1537. so] om. R. 1540. the] of H.

1544. R *misplaces here*: "Which ordeyned wer in especiall."

1551. Castell R.

1559. this] the B. 1562, 63 *are transposed in H.*

1564. nowher] neuer B.

1565. is it] it is B — it] om. R. 1571. 2nd Lord] kyng R.

He was to them so gracious & benigne,
 Bood that thei sholde to hym conuerte soone,
 Shewed onto hem many an vnkouth signe:
 Duryng tuelue daies eclipsed was the moone; 1576
 The peple astoned, knew nat what was to doone,
 But indurat in ther froward entent,
 Lik folk abashed wist nat what it mente.
 Affor the siege, or Titus gan the werre, 1580
 Ouer the cite, wherof thei wex afferd,
 Ther appeered a comeete & a sterre.
 The sterre was shape lich a large suerd;
 Touchyng the comeete, ther was neuer herd 1584
 Of swich another, so fyri, briht and cleer,
 Which endured the space of al a yeer.
 Ther festyual day halwid in Aprill, [p. 362]
 Ther preestis besi to make oblacioun, 1588
 So gret a liht the temple dide fill,
 That al the peple stondyng enviroun
 Thouhte it so briht in ther inspeccioun,
 Passyng the sunne, as it dide seeme; 1592
 But what it mente no man koude deeme.
 As the preestis dide ther besi cure
 To offre a calff, anon or thei took heede,
 The same calff — a thyng ageyn nature — 1596
 Brouht forth a lamb, the same tyme I reede;
 An ougli tokne, which put* hem in gret dreede,
 A contrarie* pronosticacioun,
 Shewed onto them of ther subuersioun, 1600
 With othir toknis froward & contrarye
 The* same tyme wer shewed euer among;
 The brasen dores of the inward seyntuarie,
 With iren barres shet, that wer most strong, 1604
 Brood of entaille, round and wonder long,
 That myht nat meue *with* thretti mennys miht,
 Opned by hymself twies on o niht.

and although he was gracious to them and shewed them strange signs of what was to come, the people remained obdurate.

Before the siege a fiery comet appeared over the city, and a star shaped like a large sword;

1584

[p. 362] and on their festival day in April a light shone brighter than the sun in the temple.

1588

1592

1596

As the priests offered up a calf it brought forth a lamb, which was an evil omen.

1600

1604

There were other froward signs: the heavy brazen doors of the sanctuary opened of themselves thrice on one night.

1585. such H, R, J.

1587. Ther] The H.

1594. the] ther R.

1598. put] took B.

1599. contraire B.

1602. The] Ther B.

1605. round] wide H.

1607. thries vpon a H.

- Chariots were
seen in the air
and men-at-
arms with
gleaming swords
and shining
armour, who
made a feint
to assault the
city;
- Ther wer seyn also charis in the hair, 1608
Men of armes *with* briht suerdes cleere,
Of plate and maile [ther] armure was so fair,
Briht as Phebus wher thei dide appeere.
And as the stori also doth vs lere, 1612
With ther sheltrouns & ther apparail,
A proffre maad Iherusalem for tassail.
- and one night
the priests
heard a dread-
ful sound in
the temple,
which ended in
the awful words,
"Let each of
us arise and
go hence."
- To the Iewes it dide signefie
A pronostik of ther destruccion. 1616
Prestis to the temple as thei dide hem hic
Vpon a niht to doon oblacioun,
Amyd the temple was herd a dreedful soun;
Of which[e] noise this was the feerful eende: 1620
"Rys up echon, & let vs hen[ne]s weende."
- Four years
before the
siege one
Ananias, the
dull son of
a peasant, ran
through the
city in a
frenzy, shouting,
- And ful foure yeer tofor the siege gan
Oon Ananyas, yong & tendre of age,
Of his berthe sone of a rud[e] man, 1624
Be disposicioun dul of his corage,
Lich as he hadde fallen in a rage
Ran in the cite bamaner frenesie,
Spared nat *with* open mouth to crie. 1628
- "A voice out
of the east,
the south, the
north, the west,
a voice from
the four winds
cries out
against Jeru-
salem,
- Vnto this noise was maad[e] non obstakle,
But obstynat euere in his entent,
Day of the feeste holde in the Thabernacle,
"A vois," quod he, "out of the orient, 1632
Vois fro the south, fro north & occident,
Vois fro foure wyndis that blowe so brod & wide,
Vois geyn* Iherusalem crieth out *on euery* side!
- against the
temple, against
the people,
husbands and
wives: woe to
Jerusalem with
a treble woe!"
- Vois geyn* the temple, ageyn the peple also, 1636
Vois ageyn husbondis, vois ageyn *per* wyues:
Wo to Iherusalem with a treble wo
Of hunger, thrust & leesying of *per* lyues, —
Of sued & fyr, and many sodeyn stryues!" 1640
This was the wrecchid lamentacioun
Which Anany cried thoruhout the toun.

1608. seyn] slayn R.

1610. ther] *om.* H, R, J, R 3, H 5, P, the Sl.

1614. Iherusalem] ther Cite Iherusalem R, J, R 3.

1619. herd] made H. 1620. feerful] dredefull R, J.

1634. fro foure] fro the R — blowe] blew R.

1635. geyn] ageyn B. 1636. geyn] ageyn B.

1637. 2nd ageyn] geyn R. 1638. 1st Wo] Who R.

1642. thoruhout] thoruh H, R, R 3, thurh J, H 5, through P.

Bete he was for his* affray ful ofte, Whippid, scoorgid eendlong & upriht, Al-wer-it so he felte [it] ful vnsofte, Was bi betyng maad feynt & feeble of myht, He stynte nat to crie so day & niht, A pronostik shewyng to the cite, How that riht soone it sholde destroyed be.	1644	Although he was often beaten for his clamour, he did not cease to cry day and night.
Be rehersaile also of Carnotence, With that cite for synne it stood so tho, That yif Romeyns be marcial violence Hadde nat komen & doon hem al this wo, The erthe sholde han opnid & ondo, Deuoured the people, void of al refuge, Or drowned the toun be sum sodeyn deluge.	1652	And John of Salisbury said that it then stood so with the city for sin, that if the Romans had not come, the earth would have opened and swallowed it.
Breefli to passe, this vengauce most terrible Doon upon Iewes for ther transgressioun, For ther demerites the punshyng most horrible, Of Iherusalem fynal subuersioun, Of the temple, tabernacle & toun, In Iosephus, who list seen al the deede, — <i>De bello Iudaico</i> , the surplus he may* reede.	1660	But you can read all about the end of Jerusalem in Josephus.
	1663	

¶ Explicit liber Septimus.

1643. his] this B, R 3, H 5. 1645. it] om. R, J, H 5, P.
 1651. for synne] om. R. 1655. peeplis H.
 1663. he may the surplus B.



BOOK VIII

¶ Incipit Prologus libri octaui.

- B**OCHAS makth heer an exclamacioun: [p. 363]
 Ageyn the Iewes gret vnkyndenesse
 Rouht be the Romeyns, þer cite & þer toun,
 Lich as the stori did heer-toform expresse, — 4
 Thei disparpiled to lyue in wrechchidnesse,
 Bi Goddes hand punished for ther outrage,
 For euere [to] lyue in tribut & seruage.
 Folwyng myn auctour, I caste for to touche 8
 So as I can, rehersyng the maneere
 How Iohn Bochas liggyng on his couche
 Spak to hymself & saide as ye shal heere,
 “Whi artow now so dul of look & cheere, 12
 Lik a man, thi face berth witnessse,
 That hym disposeth to lyue* in idilnesse?”
 “Certis,” quod Iohn, “I tak[e] riht good keep,
 Of myche trauaile that the outrage 16
 Hath be long slombre cast me in a sleep,
 My lymys feeble, crokid & feynt for age,
 Cast in a dreed, for dulnesse of corage,
 For to presume vpon me to take 20
 Of the eihte book an eende for to make.”
 “Thow wenist parauntir in thyn oppynyoun
 Bi this labour to gete the a name,
 For to reherse the sodeyn fallyng doun, 24
 And be sum newe processe for to attame,
 Of princes* sittyng hih in the Hous of Fame,
 In dyuers bookis, wher thou maist hem fynde,
 Perpetuelly to putte thi name in mynde. 28

Bochas
exclaims
against the
great unkind-
ness done to
the Jews by
the Romans, in
punishment by
God's hand for
their outrages.

Afterwards,
lying on his
bed he spoke
to himself,
asking, “Why
are you so dull
and idle?”

“Certainly,”
said John, “it
seems to me
that the
weariness of
great labour
has overcome
me. I am old,
and dread to
take up the
task of finishing
the Eighth
Book.”

“Perhaps you
think you can
get yourself a
name by this
labour, and in
some new
manner enter
the House of
Fame.

3. þer (both)] þe R. 4. the] their H.
 7. to] om. R.
 12. now] om. R, J.
 14. lyuen B, R.
 17. Hath] hast H.
 26. princes] Princessis B, J, P.

- "Your remain-
ing days are
so few, that
you are dis-
couraged. Re-
member that
when men are
buried low in
the earth there
is no reward
but of good
living.
- Thi daies shorte putte the in gret[e] dreed
Of swich a labour to take the passage,
The mor feeble the slowere is thi speed,
Thi* sihte dirkid; & thou art falle in age; 32
Among remembryng, thynk on this langage:
Whan men be buried lowe in the erthe doun,
Sauf of good lyuyng, farweel al guerdoun.
- "Worldly
goods shall
pass, wealth
and knowledge
shall be for-
gotten, friend-
ship changes
like the moon;
but a good
name left
behind exceeds
all riches.
- Worldli goodis shal passe, & that riht soone, 36
Tresour, kun[n]yng and al shal out of mynde;
Frenshep chaungeth as doth the cloudi moone;
At a streiht neede fewe freendis men do fynde.
But a good name whan it is lefft behynde 40
Passeth al richesse, yif it be weel disserued,
And al gold in coffre lokkid & conseruyd.
- "Your labour
too shall grow
dim."
"Sloth spoke
to me and
bade me cease
to labour: "for
your reward
shall be small."
"Slouthe spak to me, and bad me leue werk: 44
"For a smal reward thou shalt haue for þi meede,
"As be example thou maist othir reede."
This was the langage, I hadde therof routhe, 48
Atween Iohn Bochas and this ladi Slouthe.
- Bochas hung
his head and
was perplexed,
knowing
- Bochas astoned, gan doun his hed enclyne,
Vpon his pilwe lay hangyng in a traunce,
Stoode in gret doute, koude nat determyne, 52
Lik a man hangyng in ballaunce,
To what parti he sholde his penne auaunce
To proceede as he vndirtook,
Or leue the labour of his eihte book. 56
- not what to
do, when
Francis
Petrarch, the
laureate poet,
came and sat
down at his
bedside.
- Atwix[e] tweyne abidyng thus a while,
What was to doone in doute he gan fleete,
Halff withynne & half ouer the stile,
Koude nat discernen to hym what was most meete, 60
Til Fraunceis Petrak, the laureat poete,
Crownid with laurer, grace was his gide,
Cam and set hym doun bi his beddis side.

32. Thi] The B, R, J, R 3, P.

33. this] thi R.

40. name] Fame H. 49. this] þe H.

50. inclyne R, declyne H. 52. in] in a R.

53. in abalaunce R, in a ballance H 5.

58. What] That R — to fleete R, J.

63. bed side H.

- And as Bochas out of his slombre abraide
 And gan adawen sumwhat of his cheere,
 And sauh Petrak, lowli to hym he saide:
 "Wolkome maister, crownid with laureer,
 Which han Itaille lik a sunne cleer
 With poetrie, pleynli to descryue,
 Most soueraynli enlumyned bi your* lyue, —
- I haue desired, as it is weel kouth,
 Of riht hool* herte be humble attendaunce,
 To doon you worshep fro* my tendre youth,
 And so shal euere, void of al variaunce,
 Duryng my lyff; for treuli in substauce
 Ye haue* been lanterne, liht and direccioun
 Ay to supporte myn ocupacioun,
- As in wrytyng bookis to compile,
 Cheeff examplaire to my gret auantage,
 To refourme the rudnesse of my stile
 With aureat colours of your fressh langage.
 But now fordullid be impotence of age,
 Of decrepitus markid with many a signe,
 My labour up of wrytyng I resigne.
- I cast[e] me nat ferther* to proceede, [p. 364]
 Stonde at abay fordryue with* werynesse."
 Quod Franseis Petrak, "leese nat thus thi meede:
 Yif men no cause to reporte nor expresse,
 In thi laste age thou hast founde a maistresse
 Which hath the bridled in sooth (& þat is routhe)
 And halt thi rene, and she is callid Slouthe.
- An euident tokne of froward slogardie,
 Vpon thi bed thi lymes so to dresse.
 Ris up! for shame! for I can weel espie,
 Folk that can grone & feele no seeknesse,
 Ther chaumbirleyn is callid Idilnesse,
 Which leith thi pilwe at euen & at morwe,—
 Void hir fro the, and let hir go with sorwe!

64 At this Bochas started up and said, "Welcome, Master, who, like a bright sun, illumined Italy with poetry.

68

"From my tender youth I have done you worship. You have been my guide and example,

72

76

reforming the rudeness of my style with your fresh language. "But now I am grown old

80

84

and stand at bay, oppressed by weariness." Said Petrarch, "Do not lose your reward thus. Men will say, in your old age you found a mistress, Sloth, who bridled you.

88

"Get up; I know people who groan when they feel no illness. Your handmaiden is idleness,

92

96

68. han] shan R. 70. your] hir B.

72. riht hool] rihtful B, R.

73. fro] for B. 76. han B.

85. ferther] foorth B, R, P, forth J.

86. with] for B, R, J.

90. &] in R, om. H. 92. froward] rowarde H.

97. thi] þe H.

- who is most
contrary to all
virtue and has
drawn you
away from your
library.
- To al vertu most froward & contrarye
Is Idilnesse heer in this present lyff, 100
Which hath the drawe away fro thi librarie,
Wil the nat suffre to be contemplatiff;
For hir condicioun is to holde striff
With euery vertuous occupacioun, 104
Which men sholde voide of wisdam & resoun.
- "Arouse yourself
and open your
eyes!
"Remember the
Book of the
Life Solitary,
which teaches
virtue, and,
as I said
before, look up
and get out of
bed. Are you
going to stop
at the Seventh
Book?
- In this mateer what sholde I longe tarye? —
Lefth thi slombre and up thyn eyen dresse!
The book I-maad of lyff[e] solitarie, 108
Remembre theron, the which in sekirnesse
Techeth the weie of vertuous besynesse,
Bi and bi, who list reede eueri lyne,
Of contemplacioun moral and dyuyne. 112
As I seide erst, yit leffth[e] up thi look,
Forsak thi bed, rys up anon, for shame!
Woldestow reste now on thyn seuent book,
And leue the eihte? in sooth thou art to blame! 116
Procede forth and gete thi-silf a name.
And with o thyng do thi-silf conforte:
As thou disseruest, men aftir shal reporte.
- "Compare light
to darkness,
cowardice to
high renown,
virtuous in-
dustry to sloth.
- Maak a comparisou[n] tween dirknesse & liht, 120
Tween Idilnesse and Occupacioun,
Tween faire daies and the cloudi niht,
Tween a coward prowesse and hih renoun,
Tween vertuous spech and fals detraccioun; 124
And to conclude, all vices to represse,
Contrarye to slouthe is vertuous besynesse.
- "Industry
renews things
of old antiquity
and causes men
to live after
they are dead.
All were gone
had it not been
for writers.
- Vertuous besynesse, O Bochas, tak good heed,
Renveth alle thynges off old antiquite, 128
Maketh men to lyuen aftir thei be ded,
Remembreth the noblesse of many gret cite;
And ne wer writers, al wer goon, parde.
Wherfor, Bochas, sith thou art nih the lond, 132
Suffre nat thi ship to stumble on no sond.

103. to] for to H. 105. voide] use H, R 3. 108. bookis H.
109. sekirnesse] siknesse H.
115. on] at H. 116. eihte] eihte book R.
119. shall afftir H.
125. to] om. H. 126. is] & H.
128. Renewith R, J, R 3, H 5.
133. no] the R, J, P.

- I meene as thus: the shipp of thi trauaille,
Which hath passid the se of bookis seuene.
Cast nat anker til thou ha good ryuaille! 136
Lat no tempest of thundir, reyn nor leuene,
Nor no wyndis of the cloudi heuene,
Nor no fals ianglyng of demeres that wil blyue
Depraue thi labour, let thi shipp taryue. 140
- Haste on thi way, lat Grace crosse pi saille,
Fall on no sond of wilful negligence,
Lat good[e] will be cheef of thi counsaille,
To guye thi* rother set enteer dilligence; 144
Yif vitaille faille & wyn to thi dispense,
Yit at the laste, thynk, for thi socour
Sum roial prince shal quyte thi labour.
- Thynk, be writyng auctours did *per* peyne 148
To yiue princis ther komendaciouns,
To Remus, Romulus callid foundours tweyne
Of Rome toun; & of too Scipiouns
Thei wrot the knihthod, prudence of too Catouns, 152
Of Iulius, Pompeye & Hanybal eek also,
Bexample of whom looke that thou so do.
- Of prophetis thei wrot the prophecies
And the noblesse of olde Moises, 156
Of poetis the laureat poesies,
The force of Samson, the strengthe of Hercules;
Of two Grekis, Pirrus and Achilles,
Bi ther writyng — bookis sey the same — 160
Into this day endureth yit the name.
- And he that can and ceseth for to write
Notable exaamples of our predecessours,
Of envie men wil hym atwite, 164
That he in gardyns leet *pershe* þe holsum flours
In sondry caas that myhte do gret socours.
Laboure for othir, & spare nat thi trauaille;
For vertuous labour geyn slouthe mai most auaille. 168

"The ship of your labour has passed the sea of seven books; do not cast anchor until you have come to port.

"Hasten on your way, let Grace set your sail and Good-will be chief of your counsel; and at the last, some royal prince will reward your labour.

"Writers have done their pain to commend princes

and to write the prophecies of prophets and the laureate poesy of poets.

"And he who can and does not write the notable deeds of our predecessors will be censured by men.

135. passid] *om.* H.

144. thi] the B, R, J. 145. expence H. 151. &] *om.* R.

152. the] *om.* R — & prudence H.

153. eek also] too H.

154. whom] them H. 162. and] *om.* R.

166. gret] *om.* H.

- "A fair portrait of a prince or person who is dead quickens the heart of his friend;
- A thyng remembrid of antique,
Is whan ther is set a fair image
Of a prince of hih or lough degre;
Or of a persone a preent of his visage
Gladeth his freend, quyketh his corage;
And semblabli bexauple men may fynde
Thynges forgetyn be writyng come to mynde.
- and in the same manner forgotten merits may be put in mind by writing. The end of our labour is devoted to Christ Jesu."
- And for to make our names perdurable,
And our merites to putten in memorie,
Vices teschewe, in vertu to be stable,
That labour may of slouth haue the victorie,
To cleyme a see in the heuenli consistorie —
Despiht of idilnesse & foorthryng of vertu —
Fyn of our labour be youe to Crist Iesu."
- After Petrarch had done speaking, Bochas arose and sharpened his pen. Will had overcome the feebleness of age.
- ¶ Whan Petrark hadde rehersed this lessoun
In rebukyng of vicious idilnesse,
Bochas supprised and meued of resoun,
Roos from his couche, gan his penne dresse.
Will ouercam thymptotent feeblesse
Of crokid age, that Bochas vndirtook
For tacomplisshe up his eihte book.
- And I, John Lydgate, following after, unskilled and more than three score years old, youth and the bright colours of rhetoric faded:—
- I folwyng aftir, fordullid with rudnesse,
Mor than thre score yeeris set my date,
Lust of youthe passid [with] his fresshnesse;
Colours of rethorik to helpe me translate
Wer fadid away: I was born in Lidgate,
Wher Bachus licour doth ful scarsli fleete,
My drie soule for to dewe & weete.
- I was born in Lydgate, where but little of Bacchus' liquor flows. Fordullid by age, I shall proceed in my labour.
- Thouh pallid age hath fordullid me,
Tremblyng ioyntes let myn hand to write,
And fro me take al the subtilite
Of corious makyng in Inglissh to endite, —
Yit in this labour treuli me taquite
I shal proceede, as it is to me dewe,
In thes too bookis Bochas for to sewe.

¶ **Explicit prologus libri Octau.**

172. Or] of H — 2nd a] þe H. 174. semblaly R.
175. cometh R. 190. with] for R.
191. yeeris] of yeeres H. 192. with] om. R, J, P, H 5.
196. to dewe] ta dew H.

¶ Incipit liber octauus.

[How the proude tiraunt Domytyan Emperour of Rome, and many other Emperours & nobles for ther outrages & wrecchidnesse mischeuesly ended.]¹

BROTHER to* Titus, sone of Vespasian, [p.367] Domitian was an extortioner and pillager, who commanded men to call him god of all the world.
 Cam next in ordre, as writ myn auctour, 205
 The proude ambitious callid Domycian,
 And was in Roome crownid emperour; —
 An extorsioneer and a fals pillour, 208
 Proudli comaundid, in his estat up stallid,
 Of al the world he sholde a god be callid.

Thoruh hih presumpcioun, of hym it is eek told,
 Nouthur of tymber koruen nor of ston, 212
 Set up images of siluer and of gold,
 In tokne ther was no god but he allon.
 Into Pathmos he exiled eek Seynt Ihon,
 And ageyn Cristene the seconde next Neroun, 216
 That began first the persecucioun.

This same tiraunt, regnyng in his estat,
 To alle the cite was passyng odious;
 Best & most worthi he slouh of the Senat, 220
 And onto all that wer[e] vertuous
 Mortal enemy, and most malicious.
 And for slauhtre of senatours in the toun
 Axed the tryumphe, as maad is menciou. 224

Made among Iewes be ful gret outrage,
 Wher-as he hadde grettest suspeciou,
 To slen all tho that wer of the lynage
 Off Dauid kynreede or kyng Salamoun, 228
 List he wer put out off domynacioun
 Among[es] Iewes; this was his meenyng, —
 Slouh all tho that wer born to be kyng.

204. to] of B — of] to H.

211. is] om. H.

221. onto] to H.

225. among] of H.

228. or] or of H, R 3, P, of J.

229. domynacioun] pecessioun H, R 3.

¹ MS. J. leaf 150 verso.

- and as God rightly wished, to punish him, he was slain one night in his palace. Commodus, who succeeded, was given wholly to his fleshly appetites. 232
- Amyd his* paleis, as God wolde of riht Punshe a tiraunt & quiten hym his meede, This Domycian was slayn vpon a niht, His kareyn aftir vnburied, as I reed. 236
- ¶ And Comodus doth aftir hym succede, Which was al youe be flesshli appetit To leue al vertu & folwe his fals delit. 240
- As was then the custom, he habitually went to theatre plays and also slew all the most virtuous senators. 244
- Theatre pleyes of custum he did vse, As was the custum ther & the vsage; His liff in vices he falsli did abuse, In lecherous lustis dispente al his young age, To the Romeyns did ful gret damage: For of the Senat that wer most vertuous, Wer falsli slay[e]n bi this Comodus. 248
- During his time the public library was destroyed by lightning. Finally he was strangled by his concubine. 252
- In his tyme he strook of thundir dent And firy lihtnyng that cam down from heuene, The comoun librare was of the cite brent, Wit roial bookis of al the craftis seuene, Bookis of poetis mo than I can neuene. And Comodus, breefli to termyne, Was slayn and stranglid bi his concubyne. 256
- ¶ Helmus Pertynax cam next on the ryng, Ordeyned aftir emperour of that toun, Old & vnweeldi, slayn in his gynnyng. Aftir whom, the book makth mencioung, Be no title of successioung, 260
- ¶ But an intrusour, oon callid Iulian, Thestat vsurpyng to regne ther began. 264
- But of the noble lynage Affrican, Born in Tripolis, a myhti gret cite, Oon Seuerus, that was a knihtli man, Gadred of Romeyns a wonder gret meyne. Bothe maad strong, Iulian mette & he At Pount Melyn, a cite of Itaille, And ther was Iulyan slay[e]n in bataille. 268
- ¶ Seuerus aftir entrid the empire And took upon hym the domynacioun, Vpon Cristene, of malis sette affire, Began ageyn hem a persecucioun
232. his] the B, R, J. 238. fals] om. H. 247. fire R.
253. Helmus] Elius P, Helinus R 3. 259. ther] thei R.
262. knihtli] lykly R.
265. pount Melyn H, pount meleyen J, poyunt Mellian R, pont Miluian P.

Of tyrannye and fals ambicioun;

¶ But oon of Egipt callid Poscennys 272
Ageyn Seuerus began to werke thus:

Gadred meyne Seuerus for tassaile, and was
In purpos fulli, & theron dide his peyne, attacked by
First with hym to haue a gret bataille, 276 Pescennius
Next of thempire the crowne for tatteyne. Niger, whom,
But ye shal heere what fill of thes tweyne: however, he
On Poscennys fill the disconfiture, defeated.
And Seuerus thempire doth recure. 280

In his purpos or he myht auaille, He also fought
With oon Albynus, that was a manli kniht, in Gaul and
He hadde [in] Gaule a ful gret bataille; defeated and
Ful gret[e] blood shad in that mortal fiht, slew Albinus.
Albynus slayn of verray force & myht, 284 He then went
Seuervs aftir entrid in Breteyne, to Britain,
Kauht[e] seeknesse & deide of the peyne. where he died
of disease.

¶ Aftir Seuerus next cam Antonyne, [p. 368] 288 Antoninus
Of whom the froward disposicioun, next ap-
As alle auctours of hym determyne, — a wicked man
His besynesse and occupacioun whose whole
Set hool in flessfli delectacioun, business and
So fals a lust his corage did assaille, — occupation was
Among[es] Parthois slay[e]n in bataille. 292 fleshly delight.

¶ Macrinvs aftir tofor Bochas cam down, He was slain
Whilom a prefect in Roome the cite, 296 in battle by
Of the Pretoire, and be invacioun the Parthians.
Cam to the imperial famous dignite, Macrinvs, who
Ocupied a yeer, sat in his roial see, succeeded An-
Til Fortune list hym to disgrade, toninus,
Among his knihtis slayn at Archelade. 300 reigned one
year and
was then killed
by his soldiers.

¶ Next cam Aurelius surnamyd Antonyne, The emperor
A gret ribaud & passyng lecherous, Antoninus
Yit was he bisshop, as auctours determyne, 304 Aurelius was a
In the temple of Aliogobolus. passing lecher-
And in his tyme was oon Sabellius, ous ribald,
A fals heretik, of whom* gan the names although a
Of a sect callid Sebellianes. 308 bishop; and in
his time the
Sabellian sect
arose.

272. Pescennius P. 273. to] þe H. 281. his] this H.

286. Briteyn H.

292. hool] holly R. 295. Macrinvs] Marcyus H, R 3.

304. he] the R. 305. Eliagabolus H, R 3, Heliogabalus H 5.

307. whon B.

- In his pride he used golden vessels for vulgar purposes, which was contrary to good breeding; and when his knights slew him, his body was thrown into a privy in despite.
- This said Aurelius, ageyn[e]s al norture,*
Of fals presumpcioun, in bookis it is told,
Wolde nat pouрге his womb bi nature,
But in vessellis that wer maad of gold; 312
And in despiht[e], whan that he wex old,
Slayn off his knihtis, & nat aftir longe
His careyn was throwen in a gonge.
- After Antoninus, Marcus Aurelius was elected emperour by the Senate. He defeated Xerxes, king of Persia, and when he sat in judgment,
- ¶ Aftir this proude forseid Antonyne, 316
Into thempire be iust eleccioun
Of senatours, as bookis determyne,
Cam Aurelivs, & for his hih renoun
Surnamyd Alisaundre, as maad is mencioniun. 320
Fauht with Persiens lik a manli kniht,
And ther kyng Xerses he put vnto þe fliht.
- Ulpian, who made three books of Digests, sat with him.
- This Aurelius, this prudent knihtli man,
Whan he sat iuge in the consistorie, 324
Ther sat oon with hym callid Vlpian,
A gret cyuylien notable of memorie,
Of whom it is to his ences of glorie
Reported thus, be gret auctorite 328
He of Digestis made bookis thre.
- Marcus Aurelius lost his life by accident in a fight among his soldiers.
- Ful pitousli this emperour lost his lyff,
Casueli, as maad is mencioniun,
Among his knihtes bi a sodeyn stryff, 332
Wher he was slayn in that discencioun.
Aftir whos eende, for short conclusioun,
Tofor Bochas, the book weel telle can,
Cam Maxymynus* & with hym Gordian. 336
- Maximus, who was chosen emperour by his knights, was afterwards a bitter enemy of the Christians,
- ¶ Maxymynus*, the cronicle doth expresse,
Chose of his knihtis & his soudiours
For his victorious marcial hih prowesse
Doon in Almaigne, & among emperours 340
Set up in Roome, maugre the senatours.
Aftir strong enmy, as myn auctour seith,
With al his power onto Cristes feith.

309. norture] nature B, R, J.

312. gold] pure golde H.

325. Wlpian R. 329. He of] Off the R.

331. is made H.

336, 37. Maxymynus] Maxynymus B, J, Maximymus R, Maxymyns H, R 3.

343. With] Was R.

He was [eek] enemy, his lyff who list to seen, 344 and especially
 To cristen clerkis of gret auctorite, of old Origen;
 And specialli to olde Origen. and at the
 But in his moste furious cruelte, height of his
 In Aquileia, a myhti strong contre, 348 cruelty he was
 Of a prefect callid Pupprien he was slayn; slain by a
 Of whos deth [al] Cristen men wer fayn. prefect named
 Pupprien.

¶ Next bi the Senat chose was Gordian. Gordian made
 First ageyn Parthois he cast hym to werreie; 352 war on the
 Of Ianvs temple whan the werre gan Parthians and
 He made the gatis been opnid with the keye, opened the
 Which was a tokne, as olde bookis seye, — gates of the
 Tho gatis opnyd, to folkis nih & ferre, 356 temple of
 That with ther foon the Romeyns wolde haue werre. Janus.

With Parthois first this saide Gordian Always vic-
 To holde werre faste he gan hym speede; torious, he was
 And upon hem alwey the feeld he wan. 360 finally slain at
 Afftir he spedde hym into Perse & Meede, the Euphrates
 Alwey victorious in bataille, as I reede; by treason.
 Vpon Eufrates slay[e]n, as I fynde,
 Be fals tresoun, the cronicle maketh mynde. 364

¶ Next in ordre cam Phelipp be his name, Next in order
 His sone eek Phelipp cam with hym also, came Philip
 Myn auctour Bochas reherseth eek the same, and his son of
 The fadir, the sone baptised bothe too, the same
 Riht sad & wis in what thei hadde to doo, name. They
 And wer the firste Cristene of echon 368 were the first
 Emperours reknid; for ther toforn was non. Christian em-
 perors.

Be Poncius the martir, as I reede, [p. 369] 372 Pontius the
 In Nicea, a famous gret cite, Martyr
 Thei wer baptised, and aftir that in deede baptised them,
 Slayn in bataille, for thei list nat flee. and both
 Tofor ther deth, both of assent, parde, 376 were slain in
 Ther tresours hool, that wer imperiall, battle because
 To Cristis cherk, I fynde, thei gaff it all. they would not
 flee. They gave
 all their wealth
 to the church,

344. eek] *om.* R, J.349. Purpien H. 350. al] *om.* R, J.357. foon] *sonne* R.

360. the feeld he] he this werre H.

364. tresoun] *resoun* R. 369. sad] witty H — what] that
 J, P — to doo] a doo H.

- and Bishop
Sixtus assigned
St. Laurence to
distribute it
among the
poor.
St. Laurence
was afterwards
martyred by the
tyrant
Decius, who
- The bisshop Sixtus took pocessioun,
Vertuousli assigned it to Laurence 380
Therof* to make distribucioun
To poore folk in ther indigence;
For which[e] deede be cruel violence
The tiraunt Decius ageyn hym* took a striff, 384
Made hooli Laurence be bren[n]yng lese his lyf.
- also caused the
two Phillipps to
be slain and by
his falsehood and
deceit
became em-
peror.
- This same Decius, cursid & cruell,
Caused the slauhtre of thes Phillipps tweyne;
And for he was sotil, fals & fell, 388
Be sleihte and falsheed he dide his besi peyne
To thempire be force for to atteyne,
The scuente tiraunt be persecucioun
Which ageyn Cristene took first occasioun. 392
- During his
time St. An-
thony lived on
fruit and roots
in the desert.
- Myn auctour writ, tyme of this Decivs,
The hooli hermyte, example of parfinesse,
Be daies olde callid Antonivs, 396
Lyued in desert ferr out in wildirnesse,
As an hermyte despisyng al richesse, —
Lyued be frut & rootis, as men tell,
And of perfeccioun drank watir of þe well.
- In punishment
of Decius'
cursedness God
sent a terrible
pestilence to
Italy.
- Vpon Decius for his cursidnesse, 400
Ageyn Cristene which gaf so hard sentence,
Thoruh Roome and Itaille, myn auctour berþ
witnessse,
In eueri cite was so gret pestilence,
That be the sodeyn dedli violence, 404
The hertis of men, dependyng in a traunce,
To saue ther lyues coude no cheuisaunce.
- I will write no
more about
him.
Gallus and
Volusian
reigned but
two years each;
- Of this mateer write no mor I can;
To this emperour I nil* resorte ageyn. 408
¶ Speke of Gallus and Volusian,
That besi wern, ther labour was in veyn,
Ther tyme but short, as summe bookis seyn;
For Martyn writ, an old[e] cronicleer, 412
In thempire thei regned but too yeer.

381. Therof] Ther for B — a distribucioun H.

384. hym] hem, B, J, R.

385. brennyng] brotling P.

387. thes] þe H.

408. nil] wil B, R, J, H, R 3, H 5, P. 412. cronicleer R.

413. too] oon R.

- Bothe wer slay[e]n bi the procuryng
 And bi the purchace of oon Emylian,
 A Romeyn kniht, [the] which be slih werkyng 416
 To occupie thempire tho began.
 Be tyrannye the lordshipe ther he wan,
 Whos lordship, for lak of happ & grace,
 No lenger laste than too monethes space. 420
- This litil chapitle, as toform is seene,
 Rehersid hath & toold in woordis pleyn
 Of emperour[e]s almost ful fourteene; 424
 And of alle wer good[e] non but tweyne.
 Which to reherse I haue do my peyne,
 And to proceede ferther, as I gan,
 I mvt now write of oon Valerian.
- H**IS sone and he, callid Gallien, 428
 To al Cristene bar gret enmyte,*
 Slouh all tho, ther legende men may seen,
 That seruede Crist in trouthe & equite.
 Whos persecucioun & hatful cruelte 432
 Abatid was, as I can weel reherse,
 Bi oon Sapor that was kyng of Perse.
- Bi force of armys Sapor, this myhti kyng,
 Gan in Asia, & with his host cam down 436
 Be Tigre, Eufrates, &, knihtli so ridyng
 Toward the parties of Septemptrioun,
 To Kaukasus nat ferr, fro Babiloun;
 And al Surrye he proudli did assaille, 440
 And Capadoce he wan eek be bataille.
- Whom for to meete cam down Valerian
 To Mesopotayn with many legiouns.
 The werre was strong; but this knihtli man, 444
 This hardi Sapor, with his champiouns
 The feeld hath wonne with al the regiouns
 Affor rehersid; & thoruh Perse he ladde
 Valerian bounde with che[y]nys round & sadde. 448
- He was be Sapor, maugre his visage,
 This Valerian, so streihtli brouht to wrak,
 Lik a prisoneer bounde to this seruage
 Be obeissaunce, that founde wer no lak, 452

for both were slain at the instigation of a knight named Æmilian, who himself was emperor only two months.

This little chapter has told of fourteen emperors, of whom but two were good.

Valerian and his son Gallien were enemies of the Christians; but Valerian's cruelty was abated by Sapor, king of Persia,

who, riding north from the Tigris and Euphrates, attacked Syria and the Caucasus.

Valerian came down to meet him and was defeated and led to Persia in chains,

where he suffered the indignity of having to kneel down and let Sapor step on his back

416. the] *om.* R, J, P, R 3, H 5. 419. happ] *helpe* H.
 420. moneth H. 429. ennyte B. 430. legendis H, R 3.
 437. Tigre] *Tire* H. 439. To] *So* H. 447. Perse] *om.* R.
 451. this] *his* H, R.

- To knele on foure & to profre his bak
 Vnto Sapor whan hym list to ride,
 Therbi to mounthe, for al his gret[e] pride.
- whenever he
 wanted to
 mount his
 horse. This was thoffise of Valerian, [p. 370] 456
 Be seruytute duryng many [a] yeer;
 Wherfor he was callid of many man
 Thassendyng stok into the sadil neer,
 Which is in Frensh callid a mountweert. 460
 This was his offis, to bowe down his corps
 Whan that kyng Sapor sholde worþe upon his hors.
- This is For-
 tune's way
 with princes
 and kings;
 what happens
 her wheel only
 knows. This is the guerdoun & fauour of Fortune,
 Hir olde maneer to princis & to kyngis, 464
 Hir double custum vsid in comune
 Be sodeyn chaung[e] of al worldli thynges.
 Aftir tryumphes and ther uprisinges,
 What folwith aftir, hir wheel [weel] telle can, 468
 I take record of Valeryan:
- She shewed
 herself fickle to
 Valerian and
 favourable to
 Sapor. Yet he
 was too cruelly
 vengeable to
 soil the back of
 an emperour
 with his feet! This ladi Fortune, þe blynde fell goddesse,
 To Valerian shewed hirsilf vnstable,
 Tauthe hym a lessoun of hir doubilnesse; 472
 To kyng Sapor she was fauourable.
 But yit he was to cruelli vengable,
 With his feet, deuoid of al fauour,
 To soille the bak of an emperour. 476
- Princes should
 remember this
 and be merciful
 to their
 prisoners. Of olde it hath be songe & cried loude, —
 Record on Cirus & many othir mo, —
 Kynges of Perse of custum ha[ue] be proude,
 Aftir punshid an[d] chastised eek also. 480
 Princis of merci sholde tak heed herto,
 Aftir victorie in ther estat notable
 To ther prisoneres for to be merciabile.
- Bochas, who
 knows how to
 rebuke tyrants,
 says to Val-
 erian, "Where
 are your rubies
 and sapphires
 and rich pearls? Myn auctour Bochas in this mateer weel* can 484
 Rebuke tirauntes, that wer be daies olde;
 Turneth his stile, speketh to Valerian:
 "Wher be the rubies & sapphirs set in golde,
 The riche perle & ryinges manyfolde 488

457. a] *om.* R, H, R 3. 458. many a H, J.

460. mountheer H, mountver R 3.

463. fauour & guerdon R.

468. weel] *om.* R — here wele telle I can J.

478. on] of H, R 3. 481. herto] eek hereto R.

484. weel] weel tell B, R, J — *only the n in can is written R.*485. wer] *om.* H. 487. the] thy H. 488. The] þi H.

That thou were wont [to] were upon thyn hondis?
Now as a wrech art bounde in foreyn bondis.

Wher thou wer wont of furious cruelte,
Clad in purple withynne Roome toun, 492
To Crist contrayre in thyn imperial see,
Yaff doom on martirs to suffre passioun,—
Now listow bounde [&] fetrid in prisoun,
To kyng Sapor constreynd to enclyne, 496
Whan he list ride, bowe nek & chyne.

"You, who were clad in purple and gave judgment on the martyrs in Rome, can now bend your back to King Sapor when he wishes to ride.

Thus artow falle from thyn imperial stage!
Think on Fortune and haue hir in memorie:
She hath the cast in thraldam & seruage 500
And eclipsed al thyn olde* glorie.
Wher thou sat whilom in the consistorie
As an emperour & a myhti iuge,
List bounde in cheynys and knowest no* refuge. 504

"Thus you are fallen; think on Fortune, who has cast you into thralldom without remedy.

¶ It is ful ferr fall out of thi mynde
The knihtli deede of worthi Publius,
Of Roome a capteyn, ordeyned, as I fynde,
To fihte ageyn[es] Aristomochus, 508
Kyng of Asie; of fortune it fill thus:
Whan the Romeyns dide the feeld forsake,
This Publius among his foon was take.

"You have forgotten the example of worthy Publius, who, taken by his enemies in Asia,

This noble prince stondyng in dreedful caas, 512
His lyf, his worshep dependyng atwen tweyne,
In his hond holdyng a sturdi maas,
Smet out oon of his eyen tweyne
Of hym that ladde hym; the tothir for þe peyne 516
That he felte and the gret[e] smerte
Took a dagger, rooff Publius to the herte.

and, preferring death to servitude, smote out an eye of the soldier who led him, and he, mad with pain, struck Publius to the heart with a dagger.

Which loued more his worshep than his lyff,
Ches rather deie than lyuen in seruage; 520
This conceit hadde in his imagynatyff,
And considred, sith he was in age,
To saue his honour it was moor auantage
So to be slayn, his worshep to conserue, 524
Than lich a beeste in prisoun for to sterue.

"Publius loved his honour more than his life and did not care to die like an animal in captivity.

489. to] om. H, R, R 3, H 5.

494. Yaff] yeve H — martirs] mateers R. 501. olde] eld B.

504. no] non B. 508. Aristomachus R, H, Arstonichus P.

515. his] the P.

- "As Valerius says, rather than languish in prison a man had better choose to starve to death.
- Fortunis chapitle of hym ne* was nat rad;
Of which Valerius maketh menciou[n],
Aftir whos conceit, no man in vertu sad 528
Sholde nat longe langwissh in prisoun,
But rather cheese, lik his oppynyoun,
Of manli force & knihtli excellence
The deth endure of long abstynence, 532
- as Agrippina did, so that she lay pale and prostrate, in spite of Tiberius, and thus ended.
- ¶ As whilom dide the princesse Aggripyne,
Whan she in prisoun lay fetrid and Ibounde;
Of hir fre chois she felte so gret pyne 536
Of hungir, thrust, in stori it is founde,
That she lay pale & gruff upon the grounde,
Maugre Tiberye, & leet hir gost so weende
Out of hir bodi; this was hir fatal ende.
- "But as for you, Valerian, who with cruel heart made many a Christian die, no such thought ever entered your mind.
- Thou stood ferr of of al such fantasie, [p. 371] 540
I speke to the, o thou Valeryan!
Thi cruel herte of fals malencolie
Made whilom deie many Cristen man;
And [many] martir, sith Cristis feith began, 544
Which for mankynde starff upon the rood,—
Thei for taquite hym list to sheede her blood.
- "You were friendly enough to the Egyp- tians and their Isis.
- Ageyn his lawe thou wer impacient
And importune be persecuciou[n]; 548
Thou dist faouure & suffre in thyn entent
That Egipciens dide ther oblacioun,
Ther sacrefises & rihtes up-so-doun
Vnto Isis, of froward wilfulnesse, 552
That was of Egipt callid cheef goddesse.
- and to the Jews and Chal- dæans and Cretans; but you killed the Christians and died yourself in prison like a wretch."
- Fauourable thou wer in thi desir
To suffre Iewes ther Sabat to obserue,
And Caldeis to worshepe[n] the fyr, 556
And folk of Crete Saturn for to serue.
And Cristene men thou madist falsli sterue,
Of whos lawe for thou dist nat rechche,
Thou dei[d]est in prisoun at myscheef lik* a wrech-
che." 560

526. ne] it B, R, J, P.

538. gost] breth H. 529. 1st hir] þe H.

542. of] and R, H, R 3, H 5. 546. to] forto R.

547. his] this H — impacient R. 549. & suffre] suffrid H.

556. to] for to H, R 3.

560. deidest] diest R, deyest H 5, died J, P — lik] as B, R, R 3,

H 5.

[How Gallien sone of valerian was slayn] ¹

NEXT in ordre to Bochas tho cam doun
 Sone of Valerian, oon callid Gallien.
 But for the gräte horrible effusioun
 Of Cristen blood[e], that men myhte seen
 Shadde be Valerian, God wolde it sholde been
 Shewed openli to Romeyns be vengauce
 Of many a contre sodeyn disobeissaunce.

The reign of
 Gallienus was
 disturbed by
 rebellions, in
 punishment for
 the effusion of
 Christian
 blood shed
 by his father
 Valerian.

564

Thei of Almeyne the Alpies dide passe
 Vnto Rauenne, a cite of Itaille;
 Gothis also, proud of cheer & face,
 Hadde ageyn Grekis many gret bataille;
 And thei of Hungry, armyd in plate & maille,
 With them of Denmark, furious & cruell,
 Ageyn Romeyns wex of assent rebell.

The Germans
 came to
 Ravenna, and
 the Goths and
 Danes
 revolted.

568

572

To whos damage in this mene while
 Among Romeyns it is befallē thus:
 Woful werris which called been civile
 Gan in the cite, cruel and despitous.
 First whan thei mette was slay[e]n Gemyvs,
 Which first took on hym, in bookis as I reede,
 Of hih corage to were purpil weede.

In Rome there
 were cruel civil
 wars;

576

580

Oon Postumyv, a myhti strong Romeyn,
 Kept al Gaule vndir subieccioun;
 To ther auail vnwarli aftir slayn
 Among his knihtes, for al his hih renoun,
 Be a sodeyn vnkouth discencioun.
 Next Victoryn, hauyng the gouernaunce
 Of al Gaule, was aftir slayn in Fraunce.

and
 Posthumus,
 who defeated
 the Franks in
 Gaul, was slain
 by his knights.
 Victorian was
 slain in France,

584

588

But Gallien, of whom I spak toforn,
 Sone and heir to Valerian,
 His domynacioun off purpos he hath lorn,
 In *Republica* [anoon] whan he began,
 Lich a contrarious & a froward man
 Wex lecherous and vicious of lyuyng,
 At myscheff slay[e]n; this was his eendyng.

and Gallien,
 who lost his
 authority by
 evil living,
 died at
 mischief.

592

564. myhte] may H.

576. it is befallē] it befill H. 577. The wofull H.

585. hih] gret H, R. 592. anoone] om. R, J, H 5.

¹ MS. J. leaf 152 verso.

[How Quynlylyus was moordred by women.]¹

Quintilius,
brother of
Claudius, was
murdered by
women. I do
not know why.

¶ Next Gallien cam oon Quynlylyus, 596
A man remembred of gret attemp[er]aunce,
Brother of berth to gret[e] Claudius,
Wis & discreet in all his gouernaunce.
Who may of Fortune eschewe the [sodeyn] chaunce?—
To write his eende shortly in a clause, 601
Of women moordred; I cannat seyn the cause.

[Off Aurelian in Denmark born.]²

Aurelian, born
in Denmark,
began a great
war against
the Goths.
His labour was
for the profit
of Rome.

¶ Of Denmark born next cam Aurelian, 604
A worthi kniht his ennyes for tassaille.
Ageyn Gothes a gret werre he began,
Gat victorie in many strong bataile,
Whos noble conquest gretli did auaille
To comoun proffit; for al his werk, parde, 608
Was to thencres of Roome the cite.

He recovered
all the North
and asked for
the triumph;
but one thing,
his enmity to
Christ, eclipsed
his glory.

He recurid al Septemprion,
And westward had many gret victorie.*
Among othir, I fynde [that] he was oon 612
Axed the tryumphe to be put in memorie.
But ther was o thing* eclipsed al his glorie,
Which hath the liht of his knihthod withdrawe,
For he was enny to Crist & to his lawe. 616

Tacitus and
Florianus
followed. I
can find nothing
noteworthy
about either of
them.

Of whom Bochas list no mor now write,
But in his book goth foorth as he began,
¶ Of oon remembryng þat callid was Tacite, 620
Which was successour to Aurelyan;
¶ And aftir hym succeded Floryan,
Of which[e] tweyne no remembraunce I fynde
That is notable to be put in mynde.

[How Probus disconfited Romayns and aftir was
slayn.]³

Probus reigned
more than
seven years.
He defeated
Saturninus

Probus aftir regned ful seuene yeer [p. 372] 624
And foure moneth, which thoruh his hih renoun
Geyn Saturnynvs, with a [ful] knihtli cheer,

611. victorite B.

612. & among H, And among R 3 — that] om. R, J, H 5.

614. o thing] athing B. 619. was callid H.

626. Saturnynus] Seatourns H, senatours R 3 — ful] om. J, P.

¹ MS. J. leaf 152 verso. ² MS. J. leaf 152 verso.

³ MS. J. leaf 152 verso.

And brouht hym proudli to subieccioun;
 Natwithstondyng that he in Roome toun 628
 Took upon hym of wilful tirannye
 Hooli thempire he for to reule & guie.

Beside the cite callid Agripyne and slew
 This seid[e] Probus geyn many proud Romeyn 632 Proculus and
 A bataille hadde, list[e] nat declyne, Bonosus in
 Mette Proculus, a myhti strong capteyn, battle.
 With oon Bonosus; & bothe ther wer slayn,
 And al ther meyne of verray force & myht 636
 Slayn in the feeld; the remnaunt put to filht.

Aftir this bataille & this disconfiture Finally he was
 Probus was loggid in Smyrme, a gret cite, himself slain in
 And ther vnwarli of sodeyn auenture a tower at 640
 Slayn in a tour that callid was Ferre. Sirmium; let
 But a smal sesoun last his prosperite: no man trust
 Swich is Fortune; lat no man in hir truste; Fortune.
 Al wordli thynges she chaungeth as she liste! 644

[How Clarus and his ij. sones were myscheuyd.]¹

¶ Tofor Bochas Clarus next cam down Clarus and his
 With his too sonys, Numerian & Caryne. two sons,
 And, as I fynde, he was born in Narbon Numerian and
 And descendid of a noble lyne. 648 Carinus, next
 But whan that he most cleerli dide shyne came before
 In his empire, he gat cites tweyne, Bochas. Born
 Chose & Thelifount, in Partois with gret peyne. of a noble
 line in Nar-
 bonne, he took
 Seleucia and
 Ctesiphon,

Beside Tigre, a famous swift ryueer, 652 but was killed
 He pihte his tentis, & cast hym þer tabide. by lightning at
 A sodeyn lihtnyng his face cam so neer, the Tigris, and
 Smet al to poudere, for al his gret[e] pride; Numerian was
 And Numerian that stood be his side 656 blinded.
 Hadde a mark[e] that was sent from heuene:
 Loste bothe his eyen with the fyry leu[en]e.

639. Smyrne J, Smyryn R 3, Sirmine P — a gret] þe H.

643. Swich is Fortune] om. H — hir] hir curtesye H.

644. as she liste] at hir lust H, as hir list R 3.

645. Carus P. 647. Nabourne H.

651. Choce H — Tholifaunt H, Ctesiphon P — Parroys J.

652. Tibre H.

658. with the] eke with H, R 3, P — fire R.

¹ MS. J. leaf 152 verso.

Carinus ruled unjustly in Dalmatia and was cast down for his vicious life.

His othir sone Carynus, a good kniht,
 In Dalmacia hadde al the gouernaunce; 660
 But* for that he gouerned nat ariht,
 He was cast down & lost al his puissaunce:
 Vicious lyff kometh alwey to myschaunce.
 Sepeivs chose Dalmacia for to guye, 664
 Among his knihtis moordrid of envie.

[How the hardy quene Zenobia fau3t with Aurelian
 and was take.]¹

My author now turns to Zenobia; but as Chaucer has already told her story, I will rehearse only its outlines.

MYN auctour heer no lenger list s[ol]iourne
 Of these emperours the fallis for to write, 668
 But in al haste he doth his stile tourne
 To Zenobia hir stori for to endite.
 But for Chauceer dide hym so weel aquite
 In his tragedies hir pitous fall tentrete,
 I will passe ouer, rehersyng but the grete. 672

He describes her life in his Book of Canterbury Tales.

In his book of Cauntirbury Talis
 This souereyn poete of Brutis Albion,
 Thoruh pilgrymys told be hillis & be valis, 676
 Wher of Zenobia is maad mencion,
 Of hir noblesse and of hir hih renoun,
 In a tragedie compendiousli told all,
 Hir marcial prowesse & hir pitous fall.

She was born of the stock of worthy Ptolemy

Myn auctour first affermeth how that she 680
 Descendid was, to telle of hir lynage,
 Born of the stok of worthi Tholome
 Kyng of Egipt, ful notable in that age.
 And this Zenobia, expert in al langage, 684
 Wis of counsail & of gret prouidence,
 Passed al othir in fame of elloquence.

and married Odenathus, King of Palmyra,

Among she was armyd in plate & maille,
 Of Palmerencys* weddid to the kyng 688
 Callid Odenatus, prudent in bataille
 She was also, be record of writyng,
 Hardi, strong, hir lordship defendyng,

661. But] And B, J, P.

667. for] om. H. 669. hir] his R, J.

670. so wele did hym quyte H, R 3. 679. prowessis H.

688. Palmerenoys B, Palmerencys J, Palmyrences P, Palmy-
 nerois R, H.

- Maugre all tho, with hir cheualrie, 692
 Ageyn[e]s hire that wrongli took partie.
- Be Odenatus she hadde sonis tweyne, by whom she
 Heremanvs callid was the ton, had two sons.
 And Thymolaus, of beute souereyne. 696 After they
 Aftir whos berthe ther fadir gan anon were born
 To occupie the prouynces euerichon their father
 Of Perse and Mede; bi processe made hem fleen, occupied
 Of Zenobia, the hardi wise queen. 700 Persia and
 Media,
- Whil Odenatus wex most glorious and soon after-
 In his conquest thoruhout Perse & Meede, wards was
 Slayn he was be oon Meonyus, slain by his
 Which to the kyng was cosyn, as I reede; 704 cousin
 But for because of this horrible deede Maconius,
 And for the moordre of kyng Odenate, who was
 Deide at myscheff & passed into fate. executed for
 his crime.
- Be processe aftir, Zenobia the queen [p. 373] 708 Zenobia
 Took hir too sonis and proudli did hem leede dressed
 Tofor hir chaar[e], that men myhte hem seen, her sons in
 How thei wer born as princis to succede. purple and
 Made hem lik kynges be clad in purpil weede; 712 shewed them
 Them to diffende this myhti creature, to the people
 Hardi as leoun, took on hir hir armure. as their future
 princes,
- For al hir lordis & knihtis she hath sent, and in defiance
 Maugre the Romeyns proudli gan hir speede, 716 of the Romans
 Al the parties of the orient* continued her
 To occupie & hir host to leede. husband's
 Of themperour she stood nothing in dreede, conquests in
 Callid Aurelian, mette hym in bataille, 720 the East,
- With hir meyne hym proudli did assaille.
- On outhere side that day gret blood was shad; but was de-
 The strook of Fortune withstant no creature: feated in battle
 The queen Zenobia was taken & forth lad; 724 and taken
 Fauht first as longe as she myht endure; prisoner by
 With riche stonis frett was hir armvre, Aurelian
- Of tryumphe requeryng the guerdoun. 728
- He dempte it was couenable & sittying,
 This emperour, this proude Aurelian,

695. Herennian P. 696. Timolaus P. 707. &] om. H.
 709. hir] his R. 715. al] om. R. 717. thorient B.

- and led in his triumph. Taxe the tryumphe; it was so gret a thyng
To take Zenobia [that] such a werre gan 732
Ageyn* Romeyns, this marcial woman.
For I suppose of no woman born
Was neuer queen so hardi seyn afforn.
- She was brought to Rome in golden fetters, plunged down from her high estate into poverty. This hardi princesse, for al hir roialte,* 736
Whos hih renoun thoruh al the world was knowe,
With stokkis of gold was brouht to the cite,
From hih estat in pouert plongid lowe.
A wynde contrarye of Fortune hath so blowe, 740
That she, alas, hath pitousli made fall
Hir that in prowesse passed women all.
- Diocletian, who next appeared, was a gardener in his youth. **T**HE triumphe youe [un]to Aurelian
For þe conquest he hadde upon þis queen 744
Callid Zenobia, cam Dioclesian,*
Born in Dalmacia, his stori who list seen.
Out of his contre first he dide fleen,
Of garlec lekis, as seith the cronycleer, 748
Because that he was but a gardener.
- Later on he became a soldier and was chosen emperor. Other menciou[n] is non of his lynage.
Of his berth[e] forsook the regioun,
Lefft his craf[t] of deluyng and cortilage, 752
Gaff hym to armys, & be eleccioun
Chose to been emperour & regne in Roome toun.
First into Gaule he sente a gret poweer,
And Maxymyan he made ther his vikeer. 756
- He made Maximian his general in Gaul, but the people were rebellious until chastised by Carausius, His viker ther hadde many gret bataille
Vpon swich people that be rebellioun
Gan frowardli contrarye & assaille
Tobeye his lordship withynne that regioun, 760
Til Caransynus be commyssion,
An hardi kniht vndir Maxymyan,
Them to chastise took on hym lik a man.
- who did great damage there to the common weal by robbing the country. But be processe, the stori doth deuise, 764
His lordship ther dide gret damage
To comoun proffit; for he be couetise

732. that] *om.* R.

735. befor[n] R.

739. ploungyng R.

745. Deoclesian B.

755. into] in H.

761. Carasius P.

733. Ageyn] Geyn B, R, J.

736. roialte] cruelte B, J.

742. that] state R.

748. cronyculeer R.

760. that] *om.* H, R 3.

766. To] To the R.

- The contre robbed be ful gret outrage,
 And to hymself he took al the pillage, 768
 And of presumpcioun wered the colour
 Of riche purpil lik an emperour.
- This Karansynvs of Breteynys tweyne,
 Proudli vsurped to be ther governour, 772
 Lik a rebel geyn Roome dide his peyne
 And besied hym be marcial labour,
 With many a straunge foreyn soudiour;
 Hauyng no title nor commysсион,
 Contynued longe in his rebelloun. 776
- Wherof astonyd was Dioclesian;
 Seyng this myscheef dreedful & pereilous,
 Ordeyned in haste that Maxymyan 780
 Was surnamyd & callid Herculus;
 Made hym emperour, namyd [hym] Augustus,
 Which hadde afforn[e] no mor gouernaunce
 But of Gaule, which now is callid France. 784
- Also mor-ouer this Dioclesian
 Made in this while governour[e]s tweyne,
 Constancius & oon Maxymyan
 Surnamyd Galerius. Constancius in certeyne, 788
 In this while to wedde dide his peyne
 Douhtir of Maxymyan callid Herculus,
 Named Theodora, myn auctour writeth thus.
- Be Theodora this Constancius [p. 374] 792
 Hadde sexe childre in trewe mariage,
 Brethre to Constantyn, the story* tellith þus,
 Which aftirward, whan he cam to age,
 For his manhod and marcial corage, 796
 Was chose & maad[e] lord & governour
 Of al the world, and crownid emperour.
- Caransynvs, which hadde ful seuene yeer,
 Lich as I tolde, rebellid in Breteyne 800
 Ageyn the Romeyns, a gret extorsioneer, —

He usurped
 the title of
 governor
 and rebelled
 against Rome,

whereupon
 Diocletian in-
 vested Maxim-
 ian with the
 titles Augustus
 and Herculus
 and made him
 co-emperor.

He also ap-
 pointed Con-
 stantius and
 Galerius gov-
 ernors; and
 Constancius
 married
 Maximian's
 daughter
 Theodora,

by whom he
 had six chil-
 dren, brothers
 of Constantine,
 who afterwards
 became the
 great emperor.

768, 69 are transposed H. 773. ageyn H.

776. nor] non R.

779] Made in this while governours tweyne R.

780] Constancius and oon Maxymyan R.

782. namyd] callid H — hym] om. R, J, H 5, P.

784. of] al H. 785. R omits this stanza.

794. story] cronicle B, R, J, P — the cronycler seith thus R 3.

799. Carasynus H, R 3, Caramsynus J, Carasius P.

- Carausius was murdered by Alectus, who occupied his place three years. 804
- until slain by Asclepiodatus, who in turn brought all Britain again to subjection. 808
- Constantius fought the rebellious Italians and after an early defeat was successful. 816
- Diocletian took Alexandria and allowed his soldiers to pillage the city. 820
- He then began to persecute the Christians in Italy, and was helped by Maximian, by whose sword many a martyr was slain: 828
- the Theban Legion at Octoduram, St. Alban and Pope Marcellus. Churches were burnt and cities lost their franchises. 836
- A kniht Alletus that dede at hym disdeyne
Moordrid hym, & aftir ded his peyne
Be force onli and extort tirannye
Fulli thre yeer his place to occupie.
- Til Asclepio was sent fro Roome down,
Slouh this Alletus, maugre al his myht,
Brouht al Breteyne to subieccioun
Of the Romeyns, lik as it was riht.
And in this while, lik a manli kniht—
For Italliens gan Romeyns disobeye —
Constancius gan proudli hem werreie.
- He firste with hem had a strong bataille,
His meyne slayn & he put to the fliht.
Trustyng on Fortune, he gan hem eft assaille,
And sexti thousand wer slay[e]n in þat fihht;
The feeld was his thoruh Fortunis myht,
As she that koude dissymule for a while,
And aftirward falsli hym begile.
- I will passe ouer as breefli as I can,
Set aside al foreyn incidentis,
Resorte ageyn to Dioclesian,
Which at Alisaundre proudli pihte his tentes,
The capteyn slouh, gaff in comaundementes
To his knihtis to do ther auantage
Withynne the cite be robberyng & pillage.
- Gan ageyn Cristene gret persecucioun,
Vsed his tirannye in the orient;*
Bi his bidding Maxymyan cam down
Toward the parties of the occident.
Bothe these tirauntis wrouhte be assent,
Vndir whos swerd many [a] martire deies,
Slayn in Octodorun the legeoun of Thebeies.
- At Verolamyne, a famous old cite,
Seynt Albon slayn; his legende doth so telle.
And in Roome be furious cruelte
The pope slayn, which callid was Marcelle.
Be ther statutis & be ther doomys felle

802. Alectus P. 814. the] om. R. 818. As] And R.
823. at] that R. 828. thorient B. 832. a] om. B, R, J.
833. in] at H — Octodorn H, R — legeoun] region P, Religion R.
835. Albon] abbon R — his] þe H.

- Cherchēs wer brent, & tounes* & citees
 Lose ther franchise & al ther libertees. 840
- Froward enmy he was to Cristis lawe,
 Made many a martir deie for his sake,
 Wex feeble & old & gan hym [to] withdrawe
 From occupacioun, his reste for to take; 844
 His atturne Maxymyan he doth make.
 In his laste age, it is rehersid thus,
 Stood in gret dreed[e] of Constancivs,—
- The dreed[e] of hym sat so nih his herte,— 848
 And therupon took swich a fantasie,
 Imagynyng he myht[e] nat asterte,
 Be fraude of hym but that he sholde deie.
 Almost for feer fill in a frenesie, 852
 And of swich dreed, the book makth mencion,
 He slouh hymself be drynkyng of poison.
- ¶ As I told erst, in the occident
 Maxymyan, callid Herculus, 856
 Regned as emperour; & euere in his entent
 To pursue martirs he did ay his labours.
 Of whos berthe Bochas fond non auctours;
 This to seyne, he coude neuer reede 860
 Wher he was bor[e]n, nor of what kynreede.
- He fynt no mor of this Maxymyan,
 Of his uprisyng in especiall,
 But that he was bi Dioclesian 864
 Set in dignite callid imperial,
 Famous in armys, prudent & marciall,
 Daunted all tho that dide ageyn hym stryue,
 Slouh Geneyans callid, in noubre fyue. 868
- Rood in Affrik lik a conquerour,
 Brouht to subieccioun thre sturdi naciouns —
 Fortune that tyme did hym such fauour —
 Gat Sarmatois with othir regiouns, 872
 Many cites & many riche touns
 Bi his conquest of newe that he hath wonne;
 Thoruh the world his name shon lik a sunne.

When Diocletian grew old and feeble he abdicated in favour of Maximian.

During his last days he stood in such dread of Constantius that he fell into a frenzy and slew himself by poison.

Maximian reigned in the west and continued to martyr Christians;

and Bochas knows no more about him than that he was a great soldier and that Diocletian made him emperor.

He conquered Africa, Sarmatia, and many other regions, and his name shone throughout the world like a sun.

839. & tounes] in touns B, R, in townes J.

841. he was] *om.* R. 843. to] *om.* R, H 5, P.

851. but] *om.* H. 852. a] *om.* R. 858. labour H.

859. auctour H.

868. Genciauns H, gencians R 3, Genciens H 5, Giauntes P.

872. Sarmacia P. 873. cite H.

Yet Diocletian advised him to resign his dignity,

He was cherished in armys from his youthe, [p. 375] 876
 Dide gret emprises for* Roome the cite;
 Yit Dioclesian, as it is weel kouthe,
 Counsailled hym resigne his dignite.
 But he was loth to forsake his see, 880
 Sith he was lord & gouerned all,
 For to renounce his stat imperiall.

and finally he did; but afterwards repenting sought to recover his throne.

But be assent of Dioclesian,
 As he hymself had left al gouernaunce, 884
 So euene lik this Maxymyan
 Dischargid hymself of his roial puissaunce.
 But aftirward he fill in repentaunce
 And besi was, as dyuers bookis seyn, 888
 Thestat of emperour to recure ageyn,

In this he was opposed by Galerius, for his son Maxentius had already been declared emperor,

Which for to acheue he dede his dilligence.
 He was distourbid be Galerius,
 For his sone, that callid was Maxence, 892
 Put in pecessioun, myn auctour writeth þus;
 To which[e] thyng he gan wex envious
 And gan ordeyne menys in his thouht
 To trouble hym; but it auailed nouht. 896

and when he found that he could not succeed in his design, and his daughter Fausta had betrayed his intentions, he fled to Gaul and was finally slain by Constantius at Marseilles.

Whan his purpos myhte take non auail
 Ageyn Maxence, as Bochas doth descryue,
 His douhtir Fausta, þat knew al his counsail,
 Discurid his purpos; for which he fled[de] blyue 900
 Into Gaule & durste no lenger stryue;
 And bi Co[n]stancius in Marcile the cite
 Slayn sodeynli, lost al his dignite.

[How Galeryus oppressid martirs & cristys feith
 and mischeuesly ended.]¹

Next came Galerius, a froward vicious man of evil disposition. We do not know his descent, yet he was set high on the stage of worldly dignity.

NEXT tofor Bochas cam Galerivs, 904
 A man disposid to riot & outrage,
 Euele entechchid, froward, vicious.
 Ther is no stori speketh of his lynage,
 Yit was he set ful hih upon the stage 908
 Of worldli dignite, roos up to hih estat;
 Yit in his gyn[n]yng he was nat fortunat.

877. for] forn B. 897. his] this R. 898. doth] did R.

899. al] om. H. 900. purpos] consail R.

905. dispoised R.

906. tecchid J, teched P — froward] frowas R.

¹ MS. J. leaf 154 recto.

He was sent out bi Dioclisian,
 And maad *emperour* bi his auctorite,
 Ageyn Narseus, the proude knihtli man,
 Regnyng in Perse & lord of that contre,
 Which heeld[e] werre with Roome the cite, —
 For which Galerius took on hym this emprise, 912
 With mihti hand his pride to chastise. 916
 Diocletian
 made him em-
 peror and sent
 him out
 against Narses,
 king of Persia.

Galerius entred into Perse-lond;
 Kyng Narseus mette hym of auenture;
 Hadde a strong bataille, fauht per hond of* hond; 920
 On Galerius fill the discomfiture,
 His fortune suich he myht[e] nat endure.
 Clad in purple, as maad is mencionn,
 Of Dioclisian reseceyued this guerdoun: 924
 who defeated
 him.

At ther meetyng, anon or he was war,
 Dioclisian made hym for tabide,
 To his confusioun, sittyng in his chaar,
 To walke on foote be the charis side. 928
 With many rebuk abatid was his pride,
 That Galerius for the gret[e] shame
 Gan seeke a mene ageyn to gete his name.
 When he next
 met Diocletian
 Diocletian re-
 buked him,
 and sitting in
 his chariot
 compelled him
 to walk on
 foot alongside,
 the shame of
 which impelled

Gan for tasseble his olde soudiours, 932
 Made his ordenaunce be dilligent werking,
 Ches out the beste preeuid werreyours;
 With a gret host to Perse he cam ridyng
 And efft ageyn fauht ther with the kyng, 936
 That the Persiens, maugre al ther myht,
 Wer be Galerius that day put to fliht.
 him to set out
 again to Persia
 to recover his
 reputation. He
 fought Narses
 a second time,
 and defeating
 him won great
 plunder.

The feeld was his, gat ther gret richesse,
 Robbed ther tentis, wan ther gret pillage. 940
 In his resort reseceyued in sothnesse
 With* gret noblesse, because of that viage —
 Thus can Fortune chaungen hir visage! —
 Of Dioclisian, wher he stood in disdeyn, 944
 With newe triumphe resortid is ageyn.

This cloudi queen stant euer in noun certeyn,
 Whos double wheel quauereth euer in doute,
 Of whos fauour no man hath be certeyn: 948
 Thus Fortune
 can change her
 moods. She
 stands in un-
 certainty,

914. &] *om.* R. 920. of] for B, R, J, to P.
 923. purpull H. 924. this] his R. 927. chaire H.
 935. a gret] agre R — he] *om.* H, R 3.
 942. With] In B, R, J, P, H 5. 947. wheel] quele H.

her wheel
poised ever
ready to turn.

Ther* oon hath grace, ano^{per} is put oute.
Lat eueryman as it cometh aboute
Take his tourn & neuere in hir assure;
Faillng in armys is but an auenture! 952

Afterwards Galerius governed Africa and Italy, but in his old age he persecuted Christ's faith.

Thus Galerius aftir his bataill
On Persiens gan wexen glorious,
Gouernid Affrik & lordshipp of Itaille,
Thoruh al* thorient wex victorious, 956
Til he for age gan wexen tedious,
His laste daies maligned, as men seith,
Of fals hatreede ageyn[es] Cristis feith.

He set two vicars, Severus and Maxentius, in his empire to help him put down the law of Christ,

And hym to helpen in thes fals mateeris, [p. 376] 960
It is remembred to his confusioun,
In his empire he sette too vikeris,
The lawe of Crist toppresse & put down.*
Gaff hem poweer in euery regioun 964
To punshe martirs & putte hem to þe dep;
And in this while ful many on he sleth.

Bi this saide cruel Galerivs,
Which of thempire had al the gouernaunce, 968
Of cursid herte & corage despitous,
Be his vsurpid imperial puissaunce
Gaf auctorite for to do vengauce
Vnto tweyne, Seuerus & Maxence, 972
On al Cristen bi mortal violence.

and chose Maxentius emperor, who subsequently quarrelled with Severus. Severus died of the plague at Ravenna.

A certeyn space, bothe of oon accord,
Thestat of emperour chose was Maxence,
Til Seuerus & he fill at discord. 976
Anon aftir bi vengable pestilence,
Withynne a cite of notable premynce
Callid Rauenne, Seuerus ther was slayn,
Of which Galerius, God wot, was nothyng fayn. 980

Galerius next chose Licinius, a Danish knight, to be emperor in opposition to Maxentius,

For which in haste this Galerivs,
Hym to supporte & stonde in his defense,
Ches out of Denmark a kniht Licinius
To been emperour, thoruh knihtli excellence 984
For to withstonde & fihte ageyn Maxence.

949. Ther] Thei B, Thouh J, though P — is] may be H.
952. an] om. R.
956. al] at B.
963, 64 are transposed in B, J.
965. punysh H.
979. Rauenna R.

- But Maxence, of Romeyn knihtis all,
Was chose emperour & set up in his stall.
With which eleccioun Gallerius wex wood, 988 but the latter
Fill in a maner froward frenesie, was confirmed
His entrailles brent[e], corrupt wex his blood, in power by
And of his froward vengable malladie his soldiers,
In euery membre gan rote & putrefie, 992 whereupon
That al the hair aboute hym environ Galerius went
To all that felte it was venym & poisoun. mad; his blood
became cor-
rupt, his body
rotted.
- Lik a lazeer, coorbid bak & chyne,
In this while on Cristen most vengable, 996 He was like a
To hym auailed no maner medecyne. leper, but did
But ther was oon in Cristes feith ful stable not cease his
That spak to* hym with langage ful notable, and one who
In* woordes fewe concludyng in substauce, was of Christ's
"The grete Iub[i]ter hath take on the vengauce." faith said to
him:
- And ouermor, for short conclusioun,
With a bolde spirit to hym began abraide:
"It is nat Iubiter worsheped in this toun, 1004 "The great
In the Capitoile set," sothli as he saide, — Jupiter has
"But Iubiter that was born of a maide, taken ven-
Which wil nat suffre, of that thou dost endure, geance on you.
That ony medicyne sholde the recure. 1008 Not the
Jupiter wor-
shipped in
this town and
set in the
Capitol, but
the Jupiter
who was born
of a maid.
He will suffer
no medicine
to cure you."
- Lik a tiraunt be vengauce furious,
At myscheef deieth, as olde bookis telle,
Perpetueli with cruel Cerberus
Vpon the wheel of Ixion to duell." — 1012
For his demerites with Tantalus in hell,
Ther to resceyue his fynal last guerdoun
Which coude on martirs haue no compassioun.
- It was his ioye for to sheede her blood, 1016 It was his joy
Sent out [his] lettres to dyuers regiouns, to slay mar-
Lik a slih wolff, rauynous & wood, tyrs, and he
To slen martirs be dyuers passiouns. received his
Lik his desert resceyued his guerdouns; 1020 reward with the
Horrible deth first dide hym heer confounde, Furies in hell.
With Furies infernal lith now in hell[e] bounde.

990. wex] was H, J, P. 999. to] onto B, R, J.
1000. In] In his B, R, J, P, H 5.
1003. to hym began] hym he gan R.
1005. In] mydde H, Myd R 3 — he] I, J, P.
1022. Furies] furious R.

[How maxence the Emperour enemy to cristys feith myscheuesly ended.] ¹

After Galerius, the emperour Maxentius came with a piteous face before Bochas.

AFFTIR Galerius cruel violence
 Geyn Cristene blood, as Bochas heer haþ told, 1024
 With pitous cheer themperour Maxence
 Cam tofor Bochas, of age nat ful old,
 Famous in armys, sturdi, fressh & bold,
 Al-be he entrid nat as enheritour, 1028
 Took upon hym to regne as emperour.*

He too was an enemy of Christ's faith; and he was suddenly slain and cast into the Tiber like a rotten dog.

To Cristes feith he was also enemy;
 Aftir soone he loste his gouernance,
 Of infortunye slay[e]n sodenly,— 1032
 God on tirauntes vn-warly takith vengauce.
 Of whos buryyng was maad non ordenaunce,*
 For he was nat resceyued of the ground,
 But caste in Tibre lik a roten hounde. 1036

[How Lucynyus enemy to cristes feith was slayn.] ²

Licinius, the Dane, who became emperour, had an enemy, Maximin, who was slain in Tarsus.

¶ Next tofor Bochas cam Lycynyvs,
 A kniht of Denmark, born of riht good lyne,
 Which had an enemy, the book reherseth þus,
 An hardi kniht callyd Maxymyne, 1040
 Chose a capteyn with themperour Constantyne;
 To Cristes feith he bar gret enmyte,
 Slayn anon aftir in Tarce* the cite.

And Licinius persecuted the Christians and suddenly went mad. He allowed no Christian to abide in his house and began a war against Constantine, and, twice defeated,

Of whos deth Lycynyvs was glad, [p. 377] 1044
 Gan ageyn Cristene gret persecucioun,
 In his proceeding sodenli wex mad.
 Which comaundid of fals presumpcioun
 Whan he began doon execucioun, 1048
 That no Cristene nowher hym beside
 Bi no condicioun sholde in his hous abide.
 This Licynyvs, which falsli dide erre
 Ageyn our feith Cristen men tassaille, 1052
 Geyn Constantyn of newe he gan a werre;

1029. emperour] gouernour B, J.

1034. ordenaunce] mencionioun B.

1038. riht good of lyne R.

1043. Tarce] Trace B, J, R 3, R.

1052. Cristen] & Cristen H, R 3. 1053. began H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 154 verso.

² MS. J. leaf 154 verso.

But of his purpos in sooth he dede faille:
 For he was twies discourfited in bataille
 Be Constantyn; onys in Hungrye, 1056
 Next in Grece, beside Ebalie.

Thus Constantyn thuruh his hih renoun finally
 Gat nih al Grece & eueri gret cite,* submitted.
 Al-be Lycynyvs stood in rebelloun 1060
 Geyn Constantyn, both on lond & se.
 But whan he sauh it wolde non oþer be,
 He myht[e] nat escapen in no place,
 Put hool hymself in Constantynes grace. 1064

But Constantyn, for his rebelloun, But Constantine put him
 Gaff iugement in haste that he be ded, to death
 Lest in the cite wer maad dyuisioun to keep the
 Be Lycynyvs, wherof he stood in dreed. 1068 peace.
 This same while, as Bochas took [good] heed,
 Ther cam toforn hym, with cheeris ful pitous,
 Brethre tweyne, Constantyn & Crispus.

[Off Constantyne and Crispus & how Dalmacyus was
 slayn.]¹

TO Constantyn, of whom I spak toforn, 1072 Constantine
 Thei wer sonys, Constantyn & Crispus. had two sons,
 The same tweyne, of o mooder born, Constantine
 Cam tofor Bochas; his book reherseth thus. and Crispus,
 With hem cam eek oon Lycynyvs, 1076
 Sone to* Licynyus which in Roome toun
 Afforn was slayn for his rebelloun.

Constantyn his werris to gouerne whom, together
 Made hem vikeres, the silue same thre. 1080 with a son of
 Echon riht wis, & koude weel discerne Licinius, he
 What myhte auaille most to ther cite, made generals.
 Tencrece the proffit of the comounte.
 Ther namys tolde, Constantyn & Crispus, 1084
 Tofor remembrid, with hem Licynyvs.

Whil these thre vikeris vndir themperour They governed
 Gouvernid Roome, as knihtis riht* famous, Rome at the
 In Alisaundre roos up a gret errour 1088 time Arius,

1059. cite] contre B, J. 1069. good] om. R, J, P, H 5.
 1077. to] of B. 1087. riht] most B.

¹ MS. J. leaf 155 recto.

a false priest,
began his
heresy and
was excom-
municated.

Bi a fals preest Icallid Arryus,
To our beleue a thyng contraryous.
And for he dide ageyn our feith so werche,
Bi a decre he was put out of cherche. 1092

His error was
shewn to be
damnable by a
council
of 318 bishops
at Nicea.

Bi a scen at Bithynye ful notable,
In Nicea, a famous gret cite,
This error was preuid ful dampnable:
Thre hundred* bisshopis wer present ther, parde, 1096
And eihene, the cronicle who list see.
And alle thes clerkis of o sentence ilik
Preeuyd Arryvs a fals[e] heretik.

During this
time Constan-
tine slew his
three generals,
in favour of
his cousin
Delmatus,

This same tyme, bookis specefie 1100
How Constantyn of hasti cruelte,
The saide vikeres, nih of his allie,
Feyned a cause to slen hem all[e] thre.
No cause rehersed nor told of equite, 1104
Saf onli this, in which he gan proceede,
To make his cosyn Dalmacivs to succede.

who was
shortly after-
wards killed
by his own
soldiers.

But his fauour was nat fortunat
Toward Dalmacius, nor gracious in sentence, 1108
Among whos knihtes fill a sodeyn debat,
Constantyn ther beyng in presence.
Dalmacius, withoute reuerence,
With sharpe suerdis, to speke in woordes fewe, 1112
Vnto the deth was woundid & Ihewe.

[Off the brethre Constaunce & Constancyus & how
Magnencyus & decyus moordred hem self.]¹

Both Con-
stans and
Constantius,
young brothers
of Constantine,
wanted to be
emperor, and
so they fought
one another.

¶ Than cam Constans and Constancius,
Yonge brethre, thus writ myn auctour,
To Constantyn in tyme of Arryvs. 1116
And ech of hem be ful gret labour
Dide his peyne to regne as emperour,
Til at the laste, breefi for to sieie,
Euerich of hem gan othir to werreye. 1120

Constans had
nine battles
with Sapor and
finally over-
came him.

This saide Constans is entrid Perse-lond;
Nyne tymes he fauht ageyn Sapore,
The same kyng, as ye shal vndirstond,

1092. he] *om.* H. 1093. a scen] a Sene R, a Sceno H, assent
J, P, a scene R 3 — at] in H. 1094. Niceyne P.
1096. hundred] C. B. 1102. so nyh R.

¹ MS. J. leaf 155 recto.

- That with Romeyns hadde fouht affore. 1124
 But fynalli Constans hath hym so bore,
 To holde the feelde he myhte nat endure;
 For upon hym fill the disconfiture.
- His fortune gan to chaungen anon riht, [p. 378] 1128
 Whan that he lefte to be vertuous;
 He was in Spaigne slay[e]n be a kniht,
 In Castel Tunge, callid Magnencius.
 Than was non lefft but Constancivs; 1132
 The Romeyn kni[h]tis, destitut echon,
 Ches hem an emperour callid Vetramon.
- ¶ This Vetramon was ferr [i]ronne in age,
 Bareyn of witt, koude non lettrure, 1136
 Nor in knihtod had no gret corage,
 Nor was nat hable to studien in scripture,
 Nor lik an emperour no while to endure;
 For Constancius, of whom I spak now late, 1140
 With this Vetremon cast hym to debate.
- This Vetremon hath lefft his estat,
 List nat werreye ageyn Constancius,
 Forsook the feeld[e], loued no debat. 1144
 But of Spaigne, myn auctour writeth þus,
 As I wrot late, how that Magnencius
 Geyn Constancivs *witb* suerd[e], spere & sheeld
 Presumed proudli for to holde a feeld. 1148
- To gret damage & hyndryng of the toun,
 For many Romeyn thilke day was ded,
 Beside a cite which callid was Leoun;
 Til at the laste, of verrey coward dreed, 1152
 Magnencivs, which capteyn was & hed
 Ageyn Constancius, hath the feeld forsake.
 Loo, how Fortune can hir chaunges make!
- Magnencivs for verrey sorwe & shame 1156
 Bood no lenger, but gat hym a sharp kniff,
 Sool be hymself, wher[of] he was to blame,
 Roof thoruh his herte & loste [so] his lyff.
 His brothir Dencivs, partable of the stryff, 1160

But when he ceased to be virtuous, his fortune changed; and he was slain in Spain by Magnentius and succeeded by Vetricianio,

who was old and illiterate and no great soldier; and when Constantius made war on him he abdicated.

Magnentius, however, resisted Constantius, but finally he fled out of cowardice,

and pierced his heart with a knife. His brother Decius hanged himself.

1131. Castel Tunge] Castiltunge H, Castrell tunge J, Castyl tong P — Mangencius R, H, Maxencius J, Magvencius R 3, Magnentius P.

1134. callid] callid hym R, H 5, om. P — Vetranion P.

1148. proudli] stoutly H. 1157. gat] gaff R.

1158. wherof] wher R, J. 1160. Demecyus H — the] his H.

Aboute his necke cast a myhti corde
And heeng hymself[e], bookis so recorde.

Constantius made his uncle Gallus governor of France, a false tyrant soon slain and succeeded by Silvanus, who was assassinated.

Constancius ches aftir hym Gallus,
His vncles brothir, to gouerne Fraunce; 1164
Was a fals tiraunt, cruel [and] outraious,
Soone aftir slayn for his mysgouernaunce.
Another viker for his disobeissaunce,
Callid Siluanvs, be iugement was slayn; 1168
For which in France ful many a man was fayn.

[How Constantyne baptized bi Siluester was cured
of his lepre.]¹

I shall now make a digression to Constantine, because Bochas says little about this notable man.

OFF this mateer stynte I wil awhile
And folwe myn owne strange oppynyoun,
Fro Constancius turne away my stile, 1172
To his fadir make a digressioun,
Cause Bochas maketh but short mencion
Of Constantyn, which be record of clerkis,
Was so notable founde in al his werkis. 1176

Born in Britain, son of St. Helena, and chosen emperor, he was grievously attacked by leprosy

This myhti prince was born in Breteyne,
So as the Brut pleynti doth vs lere;
His hooli moodir callid was Heleyne,
He in his daies most knihtli & enteere. 1180
Of marcial actis he knew al the maneerz,
Chosen emperour for his hih noblesse,
Fill to [be] lepre, cronicles expresse.

and advised to bathe in a piscina filled with the innocent blood of children.

His soor so greuous that no medecyne 1184
Mihthe auale his seeknesse to recure;
He [was] counsailled to make a gret piscyne,
With innocent blood of childre that wer pure
Make hym cleene of that he did endure. 1188
Thoruh al Itaille childre anon wer souht,
And to his* paleis be ther moodris brouht.

The strange noise and hideous crying of their tender mothers was so dreadful to hear,

It was gret routhe to beholde & see,
Of tendre moodres to heere the sobbyng, 1192
Be furious constreynt of ther aduersite,

1169. a] *om.* H.

1170. I will stynt R, H, R 3, H 5.

1181. he] *om.* R.

1186. piscyne] puyssyne H. 1190. his] ther B, the J.

¹ MS. J. leaf 153 verso.

- Hir clothes to-rent, bedewed *with* weepyng.
 The straunge noise of ther hidous cryng
 Ascendid up, that ther pitous clamour 1196
 Kam to the eris of themperour,
 Of which[e] noise themperour was agrised.
 Whan that he knew ground & occasioun
 Of this mateer, afforn told & deuysed, 1200
 This noble prince gan haue compassioun;
 And for to stynte the lamentacioun
 Of all the women ther beyng in presence,
 Of merciful pite hath chaungid his sentence. 1204
 This glorious, this gracious emperour
 Is clomb of merci so hih vpon the staire,
 Spared nouthr vitaille* nor his tresour,
 Nor his langour that dide hym so appaire. 1208
With ful glad cheer[e] maad hem to repaire;
 Where thei cam sori to Roome the cite,
 Thei hom returned glad to ther contre.
 Roial compassioun dide in his herte myne; [p. 379]1212
 Ches to be sik rather than blood to sheede,
 His brest enlumyned with* grace which is dyuyne,
 Which fro the heuene dide vpon hym sprede.
 He wolde nat suffre innocentis bleede, 1216
 Preferryng pite & merci mor than riht;
 He was visitid vpon the next[e] niht.
 Petir and Poule to hym dede appere,
 Sent fro the Lord as heuenli massagers, 1220
 Bad Constantyn been of riht good cheere,
 "For he that sit aboute the nyne speeris,
 The Lord of Lordis, Lord of lengest yeeris,
 Wil that thou wete, — haue it weel in mynde, —1224
 In mount Serapti thou shalt thi leche fynde.
 God of his grace list the to visite,
 To sheede blood because that thou dost spare;
 He hath vs sent thi labour for to quyte; 1228
 Tidyngis brouht of helthe & thi weelfare
 Pope Siluester to the shal declare,

that the
 emperour
 was horrified;
 and climbing
 high on the
 stair of mercy
 he sent them
 all home un-
 harmed.

His heart was
 penetrated by
 royal compas-
 sion and he
 chose to be ill
 rather than
 shed the blood
 of innocents.

The next night
 Peter and Paul
 appeared to
 him and bade
 him be of good
 cheer: "You
 will find your
 leech on Mt.
 Serapti.

"God has
 sent us to
 reward your
 labour; Pope
 Sylvester will
 tell you how
 you shall be
 cured."

1195. of] and R, & H, R 3, H 5.

1196. pitous] hidous H.

1203. Of] And H. 1205. 2nd this] & this H.

1207. vitaille] his vitaille B, R, H — his] om. H, R 3, P.

1209. hem] home H.

1214. with] bi B, J, P. 1217. mercy and pite R.

- As we haue told[e], be riht weel assured,
Of thi seeknesse how thou shalt be recurid, 1232
- This Sylvester
did, and bap-
tising him, he
became well.
- To mount Serapti in al hast that thou seende,
Suffre Siluester come to thi presence.”
Souht & founde, breefli to make an eende,
Resceyued aftir *with* deu reuerence, 1236
Dide his deueer of enteer dilligence,
Lik as the lyff of Siluester hath deuised,
Be grace maad hool, whan he was baptised.
- His flesh was
suddenly made
white by
washing in the
piscina of holy
baptism.
- His flesh renewed and sodenly maad* whiht 1240
Be thries wasshyng in the fressh piscyne
Of holi baptem, welle of most deliht,
Wher the Hooli Gost did[e] hym enlumyne.
Enfourmyd aftir be teching & doctryne 1244
Of Siluester, lik as myn auctour seith,
Of alle articles that longe onto our feith.
- The font of
porphyry was
afterwards
encircled with
a ring of gold,
and pearls
and fine stones
at Constan-
tine's expense.
- The font was maad[e] of porfirie stoon,
Which was aftir be cost of Constantyn 1248
With a round bie, that dide aboute gon,
Of gold & perle & stonis that wer fyn;
Myd of the font, riht up as a lyn,
Vpon a piler of gold a laumpe briht, 1252
Ful of fyn bawme, that brente day &* niht.
- He also pro-
vided of pure
gold a pillar,
a lamp, a
lamb, an image
of Our Saviour,
- A lamb of gold he did also prouyde,
Set on this font vpon a smal pileer,
Which lik a conduit vpon eueri side 1256
Shad out water as eny cristal cleer,
On whos riht side an ymage most enteer
Was richeli forgid of our Saueour,
Al of pure gold, that coste gret tresour. 1260
- and one of
John the
Baptist.
- And of this lamb vpon the tothir side,
An image set longe to endure
Of Baptist lohn, with lettres for tabide
Graue coriousli, & this was the scripture: 1264
“Ecce Agnus Dei, that did for man endure,
On goode Friday offrid up his blood,
To saue mankynde starf upon the rood.”

1232. recurid] cured R. 1233. that] *om.* R.
1240] His flesh his senewes maad sodenli whiht B, J; R and
H 5 *omit* 2nd his.
1241. puyssyne H. 1246. longeth to R.
1253. day &] al the B, J. 1255. this] his R.
1256. conduct R. 1264. was] *om.* R.

- He leet also make a gret censeer
 Al of gold, fret with perles fyne,
 Which be nyhte* as Phebus in his speer
 Thoruh al the cherch most fresshli did[e] shyne;
 Ther wer fourti stonis iacynctyne.
 Appollos temple, myn auctour writ the same,
 Was halwid newe in Seynt Petris name.
- The Romeyn templis, that wer bilt of old,
 He hath fordoon with al ther maumetrie;
 Ther false goddis of siluer & of gold
 He hath tobroke vpon ech partie.
 This goodli prince, of goostli policie,
 Set of newe statutis of gret vertu
 To been obseruid in name of Crist *Iesu*.
- ¶ The firste lawe, as I reherse can,
 In ordre set with ful gret reuerence,
 That Crist *Iesu* was sothfast god & man,
 Lord of Lordis, Lord of most excellence,
 "Which hath this day, of his benyuolence,
 Cured my lepre, as ye haue herd deuysed,
 Be blissid Siluester whan I was baptised.
- This gracious Lord, my souereyn Lord *Ihesu*,
 From hen[ne]s-foorth, for short conclusioun,
 I wil that he, as Lord of most vertu,
 Of feithful herte & hool affecioun
 Be worsheped in euery regioun; —
 No man so hardi my biddeng to disdeyne,
 List he incurre of deth the greuous peyne."
- ¶ Folwyng the day callid the secounde, [p. 380]
 This Constantyn ordeyned a decre,
 That who that euere in [the] toun wer founde
 Or ellis-wher aboute in the contre, —
 What-euer he were, of hih or louh degre,
 That blasffemed the name of Crist *Iesu*,
 Be doom sholde haue of deth a pley[n] issu.
- ¶ The thridde day, in euery mannys siht,
 Bi a decre confermed & maad strong,
 To any Cristene who that dide vnriht

1268 Also a great censer of gold and pearls that shone like the sun, and 40 jacinths. He turned the temple of Apollo into St. Peter's

1276 and destroyed the Roman temples and broke the images of the false gods, and enacted new statutes of great virtue.

1280

1284 The first declared that Christ *Jesu* was truly god and man.

1288

1292 "From henceforth I will have him worshipped in every part of my empire upon pain of death."

1296 The second punished blasphemy of the name of Christ by death.

1300

1304 The third provided for the confiscation of one half of the wealth

1269. Al] *om.* H. 1270. nyhte] myhte B.
 1272. wer] was R. 1277. Ther] The R.
 1281. name] þe name H.
 1295. of deth the] the deth off R.

- of any man who oppressed or wronged a Christian.
- Be oppressioun or [be] collateral wrong,
It should[e] nat be taried ouer long,
Who wer convict or gilty shal nat chese
Be lawe ordeyned halff his good to lese. 1308
- The fourth gave to the pope the prerogative of ruling the priests as the king rules his temporal lords.
- ¶ The fourthe day, among[es] Romeyns all
This pryuylege pronouncid in the toun,
Youe to the pope sittying in Petris stall, 1312
As souereyn hed in euery regioun
To haue the reule and iurediccious
Of preestis alle, allone in alle thyng,
Of temporal lordis lich as hath the kyng. 1316
- The fifth granted freedom to the church and the right of asylum to fugitives.
- ¶ To the cherche he granted gret franchise
The fife day & special liberte:
Yif a feloun in any maner wise
To fynde socour thidir dide flee, 1320
Witbynne the boundis fro daunger to go fre,
To been assurid & haue ther ful refuge
From execucioun of any temporal iuge.
- The sixth forbade men to build churches without a licence from the bishop.
- ¶ No man presume witbynne no cite, — 1324
The sixte day, he gaff this sentence, —
No man so hardi, of hih nor lough degre,
To beelde no cherche, but he haue licence,
Of the bisshop beyng in presence; 1328
This to seyne, that he in his estat
Bi the pope afforn be approbat.
- The seventh decreed that the tenth part of all the royal possessions should be appropriated annually for building churches.
- ¶ The seuenthe* day, this lawe he did eek make:
Of all pocessiouns which that be roiall, 1332
The tenthe part [y]eerli shal be take
Be iugis handis, in parti & in all,
Which[e] tresour thei delyuere shall,
As the statut doth pleynli specefie, 1336
Hool & enteer cherchis to edefie.
- On the eighth day Constantine took off his royal garments, and kneeling down before St. Peter,
- ¶ The eihte day meekli he ded hym quite,
With gret reuerence & humble affeccious, 1340
Whan he did of al his clothes white
And cam hymself on pilgrymage doun
Tofor Seynt Petir of gret deuocioun;
Natwithstondyng his roial excellence,
Made his confessioun in open audience. 1344

1310. fourthe] fourty R.

1315. 2nd alle] on H.

1331. seuenthe] vij^{te} B.

1335. Whiche] with H.

- His crowne take of, knelyng thus he saide
 With weepyng eyen & vois most lamentable,
 And for sobbyng as he myht abraide:
 "O blissid *Iesu*, o Lord most merciabe,
 1348 Lat my teres to the be acceptable;
 Resseyue my prayer; my request nat refuse,
 As man most synful, I may me nat excuse.
- I occupied thestat of the emperour;
 1352 Of thi martirs I shadde the hooli blood,
 Spared no seyntes in my cruel error,
 The to pursue fell, furious & wood.
 Now blissid *Iesu*, most gracious & most good,
 1356 Peised & considered myn importable offense,
 I am nat worthi to come in thi presence,
- Nor for to entre into this hooli place,
 Vpon this ground vnhable for to duell,
 1360 To openen myn eyen or to left up my face;
 But of thi merci so thou me nat repell,
 As man most synful, I come vnto thi well,
 Thi welle of grace and merciful pite
 1364 For to be wasshe of myn iniquite."
- This exauple in open he hath shewed,
 His staat imperial of meeknesse leid aside,
 1368 His purpil garnement with teres al bedewed;
 Suerd nor sceptre nor hors upon to ride
 Ther was non seyn, nor baners splaied wide;
 Of marcial tryumphes ther was no tokne founde,
 1372 But cryng merci, themperour lay plat to grounde.
- The peeplis gladnesse was medlid *witb* wepyng,
 And ther weepyng was medlid *witb* gladnesse,
 To seen an emperour and so notable a kyng
 1376 Of his free chois shewe so gret meeknesse.
 Thus entirmedlid was ioie & heynesse:
 Heynesse for passid old vengauce,
Witb newe reioisshyng of gostli repentaunce.
- This ioye was lik a feeste funerall, [p. 381] 1380
 In folk of custum that doon ther besi cure
 To brynge a corps, which of custum shall

removed his
 crown and
 confessed,
 weeping and
 with a sorrow-
 ful voice, that
 he was a sinful
 man,

that he had
 shed the blood
 of saints and
 martyrs.
 "I am not
 worthy, blessed
 Jesus, to
 appear in thy
 presence;

but I come to
 thee to be
 washed clean
 of my
 iniquity."

This example
 he gave in
 public, bedew-
 ing his
 garments
 with tears and
 laying aside
 his royal
 insignia.

The people
 wept for joy
 to see so
 notable an em-
 peror and king
 shew such
 meekness.

It was like a
 funeral where
 the corpse
 comes to life,

1345. thus nelyng R. 1347. as] so as H. 1349. be to be H.
 1352. the] om. H, an R. 1354. cruel in myn error H.
 1355. The] Them (*but corrected*) H, Them P — fell] most P.
 1369. nor] ne H. 1377. was ioie] wer loyes H.

- and everybody
laughs and
weeps at once.
- Haue al the rihtis of his sepulture,
And in this tyme, of sodeyn auenture 1384
To lyf ageyn restored be his bonys,
Causing his freendis to lauhe & weepe attonis.
- Thus the people
reioiced and
wept by turns
to see their
emperour asking
mercy for his
sins.
- Semblabli dependyng atween tweyne,
The people wepte, & therwith reioisshyng 1388
To seen ther emperour so pitousli compleyne,
For his trespacis merci requeryng:
Of ioie and sorwe a gracious medlyng.
That day was sey[e]n gladnesse meynt with moone, 1392
With weepyng laughtre, & al in o persone.
- Afterwards he
dug up 12
stones with his
own hands and
put them into
12 coffins, in
memory of the
12 apostles, and
built the church
of St. Lateran
in their name.
- Aftir al this he digged up hymselfe
Stones twelue, wher he lay knelyng,
[And] putte hem in cofynes tuelue, 1396
On the tuelue postlis deuoutli remembryng,
Compassed a ground large for beeldyng,
Beside his paleys caste theron to werche
In Cristes name to sette up ther a cherche. 1400
- He also made
a law, that if
any pauper or
cripple became
a Christian he
should receive
a new outfit of
garments and
20 shillings.
- The place of olde callid Lateranence,
Bilt and edefied in thapostlis name.
Constantynvs bar al the dispense,
Ordeyned a lawe, myn auctour seith the same, 1404
Yif any poore, nakid, halt or lame
Resceyue wolde the feith of Crist Iesu,
He sholde be statut be take to this issu:
- In his promys yif he wer founde trewe, 1408
That he wer nat be feynyng no faitour,
He sholde first be spoiled & clad newe
Be the costage off the emperour,
Tuenti shillyng resceyue to his socour, 1412
Of which resseit nothyng was withdrawe,
Be statut kept & holde as for a lawe.
- I cannot re-
count all his
noble deeds and
victories; but
they are all
told in the
Legend of
Sylvester.
- It wer to longe to putte [al] in memorie,
His hih prowesse & his notable deedis, 1416
And to rehearse[n] euery gret victorie
Which that he hadde with hostis that he ledis;
And to remembre al his gracious speedis,

1394. digged] giggid (*partly erased*) R.

1397. On] Of R.

1398. large for] for large (*biggyng*) H.

1409. fatour R, H, fantour R 3.

1418. 1st that] *om.* H, R 3 — 2nd that] which H.

- The surplusage, who list [to] comprehende, 1420
 Lat hym of Siluestre reede the legende.
- And among othir, touchyng his visioun,
 Which that he hadde, in cronicles men may lere,
 Whan that he slepte in his roial dongoun, 1424
 How Crist to hym did graciousli* appeere,
 Shewed hym a cros, & seide as ye shal heere:
 "Be nat afferd upon thi foon to falle,
 For in this signe thou shalt ouercome hem alle." 1428
- Be which auyseoun he was maad glad & liht
 Thoruh Goddis grace & heuenli influence.
 First in his baner, that shon so cleer & briht,
 The cros was bete, cheef tokne of his diffence. 1432
 Slouh the tiraunt that callid was Maxence,
 Aftir whos deth[e], thoruh his hih renoun
 Of al thempire he took pcessioun.
- In which estat he meyntened trouthe & riht, 1436
 Vpon al poore hauyng compassioun,
 Duryng his* tyme holde the beste kniht
 That owher was in any regioun,
 Of Cristes feith thymperial champioun, 1440
 Thoruh his noble knihtli magnificence
 To alle Cristene protectour & diffence.
- Aftir his name, which neuer shal appall,
 Chaunged in Grece the name of Bizante; 1444
 Constantynople he did it aftir call,
 And on a steede of bras, as men may see,
 Manacyng of Turkis the contre,
 He sit armyd, a gret suerd in his hond 1448
 Them to chastise that rebelle in that lond.
- Reioisshye ye folkis that born been in Breteyne,
 Callid othirwise Brutis Albioun,
 That hadde a prince so notabli souereyne 1452
 Brouht forth & fostrid in your regioun,
 That whilom hadde the domynacioun,
 As cheef monarche, prince & president,
 Ouer al the world, from est til occident. 1456

especially his
 vision of
 Christ,
 who shewed
 him a cross
 saying, "By
 this sign shalt
 thou conquer,"

which so
 pleased
 Constantine
 that he had
 the cross
 beaten in his
 banner, and
 slaying Max-
 ence, took
 possession of
 the whole
 empire.

He ruled
 justly, having
 compassion on
 the poor, and
 was held the
 best knight of
 his time.

He named
 Byzantium
 Constantino-
 ple; and there
 he still sits
 armed on a
 steed of brass,
 menacing the
 country of
 the Turks.

Rejoice,
 Britons,
 that your land
 brought forth
 such a prince,
 chief monarch
 of all the
 world!

1425. did graciousli] graciousli did B.

1426. ye] om. R.

1429. glad] om. R.

1432. bete] bore H.

1438. his] this B.

1450. ye] the R.

1455. monarchye H.

When he died
the sun was
not seen for
a month,
and there was
a great comet
in the south
that drew
towards his
palace in
Nicomedia.

Tyme of his deth, that moneth of þe yeer
Phebus nat seyn, *wit*drouh his feruent heete;
And longe afforn[e] large, brod & cleer,
Toward Affrik shewed a gret comete, 1460
Alway encresyng, drouh toward the sete
Of Nichomedie, shon erli & eek late,
Wher in his paleis he passed into fate.

[How Iulian Apostata enemy to cristys bi fals Illu-
sions was chose Emperour and aftir slayn.]¹

After Con-
stantine came
Julian the
Apostate, his
cousin, a cursed
man.

A FFTIR the deth of this marcial man,— [p.382] 1464
I meene this noble worthi *Constantyn*, —
Kometh Thapostata, cursid Iulian,
Which be discent to *Constantyn* was cosyng.
His gynyng cursid, hadde a cursid fyn, 1468
Entred religioun, as bookis specefie,
Vnder a colour of fals ipocrisie.

who entered re-
ligion out of
hypocrisy,
a double iniquity.
Fie on
such feigned
perfection!

It hath be seid[e] of antiquite,
Wher that ther is dissymuled hoolynesse, 1472
It is icallid double iniquite, —
Fih on al suich feyned parfitnesse!
For symulacioun curid *wit*h doubilnesse
And fals[e] semblaunt with a sobre face, 1476
Of alle [fals] sectes stonde ferthest out of grace.

For a time he
devoted himself
to religion, and
then, wearyng
of his order,
forsook it and
gave himself up
to necromancy.

A certeyn space, as maad is mencion,
To al perfeccioun he did hymself applie,
Til he wex weri of his professioun, 1480
Forsook his ordre bi apostacie.
And first he gaff hym to nigromancye,
Double Apostata, as myn auctour seith,
First to his ordre & aftir to our feith. 1484

Constantius
sent this root
of hypocrisy to
be governor of
Gaul, where he
conspired to
get possession
of the whole
empire,

Bi ordynauce of *Constancivs*,
This said Iulian, roote of ipocresie,
Of gouernaunce froward & vicious,
Was sent to Gaule with gret cheualrie 1488
As viker chose the contre for to guye.

1461. sete] cite R. 1466. the Apostita H.
1468. 1st cursid] om. R. 1472. ther] he R.
1473. callid R. 1476. sobre] doubil H, soure J.
1477. fals] om. J, P.

¹ MS. J. leaf 157 recto — How] So J.

Gat hym fauour & falsli gan conspire
To haue pocessioun of al the hool empire.

And for he was nat likli to atteyne
To that estat, he did his hert applie
Another mene pleynli to ordeyne,
Wikked spiritis to make of his allie,
Becam a prentys to lerne sorcerye,
To haue experience be invocaciouns
To calle spiritis *with* his coniuorisouns.*

1492 and at first
not succeeding,
allied himself
with wicked
spirits and be-
came an ap-
prentice to
sorcery,
1496

Be fals illusioun in the peeplis sihte,
Of wikked spiritis had so gret fauour, —
A crowne of laurer upon his hed aliht, —
Made folk to deeme, bi ful fals errour,
It cam be myracle, to chese hym emperour.
Which of trouthe as in existence
Was but collusioun* & feyned apparence.

1500 and made the
people believe
that a crown
of laurel
alighted
on his head by
miracle,
whereas it
was set there
by the spirits
to whom he
sacrificed.
1504

With hem he hadde his conuersacioun,
Spared nat to doon hem sacrefise
With cerymonyes & fals oblacioun,
And to thempire he roos up in this wise.
Thestat resceyuyd, first he gan deuyse
Ageyn Grekis, out of his contre ferre,
To make hym strong with hem to haue a werre.

In this manner
he was chosen
emperor.
1508

The Feend a while was to hym fauourable,
Gaf hym entre and pocessioun,
And made hym promys for tabide stable
In his lordship and domynacioun,
To haue this world vndir subieccioun;
Of which behest he stood in pereilous cas,
Folwyng thoppynyoun of Pigtagoras.

He made war
on Greece; and
for a while the
devil favoured
him.
1516

¶ Pigtagoras hadde this oppinyoun:
Whan men deide, anon aftir than
Ther was maad[e] a translacioun
Of his speryt in-tanothir man,
A maner liknesse; the Bible telle can,
The double speryt of grace & prophecie
To Heliseus was grantid be Helye.

Following the
opinion of
Pythagoras,
1520 who believed
in the trans-
migration of
souls,
1524

1491. To haue] off all R — al] *om.* R.

1496. Becam] he becam H, J, R 3.

1498. coniuorisouns] coniuariouns B. 1502. to] *om.* H.

1505. collusioun] intrusioun B, R, J, H 5.

1506. conuersaciouns H. 1508. oblacions H.

1511. Ageyn] geyn H. 1512. haue a] ha H.

- he thought that
he himself had
such a spirit,
with all its
knowledge and
wisdom,
- Heeron concludyng, lik his oppynyoun,
As Pictagoras affermed in sentence, 1528
He that hadde ful pecessioun
Of suich a speryt, in verray existence
Sholde haue the same wisdam & science,
The disposicioun aftir hym as blyue, 1532
Which hadde that speryt whil he was heer alyue, —
- the spirit of
Alexander:
and Pluto en-
couraged him
in his beliefe.
- Of gouernaunce and also of nature
Resemblyn hym, of maneres & luyung.
And thus be fraude Pluto did his cure 1536
To make Iulian to truste in eueri thyng,
He hadde be berth the sperit of the kyng
Callid Alisaundre, be which he sholde wynne
This world be conquest, whan-euer hym list begynne.
- So he trusted
in Pluto and
the infernal
gods.
- Thus gan he fonne & falle in fantasie 1541
To truste on Pluto & goddis infernal,
Thei sholde enhance hym bi his cheualrie
For to posseede and reioysshe al, — 1544
Suerd, sceptre, crowne and staat imperial,
Passe Alisaundre in honour & in glorie
And hym excelle in tryumphal victorie.
- He also trusted
Satan, and
became a
mortal enemy
to Christ's law
and broke
crosses and
crucifixes.
Jesus he called
'Gallilee' and
sometimes 'the
Nazarene' in
scorn.
- He trusted Sathan, be whom he was desceyuid, [p.383]
To Cristes lawe becam mortal enmy; 1549
Wher that euere that he hath parceyued
Cros or crucifix, he brak hem vengabli.
Be fals language he callid traitourly, 1552
Crist Iesu he callid Gallile,
And of despiht sumtyme Nazare.
- Ageyn our feith this tirant wex so wood,
[And] ageyn Crist hadde so gret hatreede; 1556
Slouh many martir & falsli shadde hir blood,
An idolatre & renegat in deede.
Heeld mortal werre *with* hem of Perse & Meede;
Comyng to Perse, first he gan debate 1560
Geyn Sapor kyng, of whom I spak but late.
- He slew many
martyrs and
was an idolater
and renegade.
- Of Parthois also he entrid thoruh the rewm,
Wher he fond no maneer resistance.
And as he cam forbi Iherusalem, 1564
- And he fought
many wars

1528. in] this H. 1529. He that] bat he H.
1543. hym] om. H. 1545. Suerd] Off Swerde R.
1550. 1st that] om. H. 1552. callith H.
1558. &] an H. 1561. Sapor kyng] kyn Sapore H.

- To the Jewes of newe* he gaf licence
 To beelde the temple with gret dilligence,
 In despiht, of purpos to do shame
 To Cristene cherchis, bilt newe in Cristes name. 1568
- In this while he kauht a gret corage,
 In a theatre maad brood in that toun,
 Too wilde beestis cruel and sauage
 Of seyntis blood to make oblacioun, 1572
 Thei to deuoure men of religioun.
 And alle Cristene of purpos to destroye,
 His lust was set & al his worldly ioie.
- Bi an heraud that dide his host conveye, 1576
 Of verray purpos to brynge hym in treyne,
 Bi straunge desertis fond out a froward weye.
 The heete importable did hym so constreyne,
 Brente thoruh the harneys, felte so gret peyne; — 1580
 The drye sondis, the heir infect with heete
 Made many a man ther lyff in hast to lete.
- This froward tiraunt, knowyng no remedie,
 Of cursid herte gan Crist Iesu blasffeme, 1584
 And of malicious hatreed & envie,
 Wood & furious, as it dide seeme,
 Gan curse the Lord, that al this world shal deeme,
 Crist Iesus, which of long pacience 1588
 List nat be vengauce his* malis recompence.
- A mor cruel was ther neuer non,
 Nor mor vengable: nat Cerberys in hell,
 Mortal enemy to goode men euerichon, 1592
 Whos blasfemys and rebukis fell,
 Be rehearsaile yif I sholde hem tell, —
 I am afferd the venymous violence
 Sholde infecte the heir with pestilence. 1596
- He cast out dartis mor bittir than is gall
 Of blasfemye & infernal langage;
 And in this while among his princis all
 A kniht vnknowe, angelik of visage, 1600
 Fresshly armyd, to punshen his outrage,

and let
 the Jews
 rebuild their
 temple, to do
 shame to
 Christian
 churches.

In Jerusalem
 he offered
 saints to wild
 beasts and all
 his joy
 lay in the
 destruction
 of Christians.

A herald, who
 guided his
 army, led him
 into a desert,
 where the heat
 killed many of
 his men;

and this froward
 tyrant,
 knowing nothing
 better, began
 to curse
 Christ, of
 malicious
 hatred.

A more cruel
 and revenge-
 ful man was
 never seen, not
 even Cerberus
 in hell. His
 blasphemies
 would infect
 the air with
 pestilence if I
 were to repeat
 them.

During this
 while an un-
 known knight
 appeared
 among
 his princes and
 thrust a spear
 into his heart.

1565. or newe] anon B, J, anone P — of newe he gaf] of newe and of R.

1573. to] om. H.

1576. heraud] Heronde H, heraude J, herand R, Herald P.

1579. The] to H — hym] hem H. 1580. the] their H.

1589. his] this B. 1591. nat] om. H.

With a sharp spere, thoruh euery synwe & veyne,
Of this tiraunt roof the herte on tweyne.

Some men say
this knight was
Mercurius,

Bathid in his blood, this tiraunt fill down lowe, 1604
To God & man froward & odious.

Thouh for that tyme the kniht ne was nat knowe,
Yit summe men seyn it was Mercurius,
Which bi the praicer of Basilius 1608
This tiraunt slouh, as cronicles don* us lere,
Bi a myracle of Cristes mooder deere.

who, buried
before in
Cesarea, rose
from his grave
(a strange
thing to see),
arrayed himself
in his armour,
that hung
beside his
sepulchre, and
mounted a
horse.

This Mercurius, as bookes determyne,
In Cesaria, a myhti strong cite, 1612
Witbynne the contre callid Palestyne,
Buried afforn, roos up at this iourne
Out of his graue, a straunge thyng to see;
An hors brouht to hym, arraied in his armure, 1616
Which heeng toforne beside his sepulture.

The same
armour was
not seen until
the next even-
ing, and Julian
was struck
down at mid-
day.

The same armvre was nat seyn that niht
Nor on the morwe at his graue founde 1620
Til mydday hour, that Phebus shon ful briht,
Whan Mercury* gaf hym his fatal wounde,
His blasfemye for euer* to confounde.
Which thyng accomplisshed, this myracle for to prue,
He and his armure wer ther ageyn at eue. 1624

That was the
sudden end of
his blasphemy.
His last words
were, "Thou
hast conquered,
Gallilee." He
cast his blood
in the air in
despite of Jesus.

Of his blasfemye this was the sodeyn wrak
Which the tiraunt resceyuid for his mede.
The laste woord I fynde that he spak:
"Thou Gallile hast ouercome in deede!" 1628
Took the blood[e] that he did[e] bleede,
This deuellissh man, deying in despeir,
Despiht of Iesu cast up in the heir.

His body was
flayed and his
skin tanned
and nailed to
the gate of
his palace by
the Persian
king Sapor.

His bodi flay[e]n & his skyn was take, [p. 384] 1632
Tawed aftir be presept and biddying
Souple and tendre as thei coude it make, —
Sapor bad so, that was of Perse kyng,
That men myht haue therof knowlechyng 1636
Erli on morwe & at eue late,
He did it naille upon his paleis gate.

1604. his] om. R, his oun H. 1605. To God &] To goode a R.
1606. ne] om. H. 1607. seyn] seynt R.
1609. don] doth B, J. 1621. Mercurius B, R, J.
1622. euer] euermor B, H, R, P, H 5, R 3.
1630 is misplaced before 1628 in H, correction indicated.
1631. in] in to H.

- And to a cite that was callid Kaire,
 As cronicles make rehersaille,
 This Apostata wolde ofte a-day repaire
 To a woman, which hadde in hir entraille
 Spiritis closid, to make his dyuynaille.
 In whos wombe, bareyn & out of grace,
 Of wikkid feendis* was the restyng* place.
- 1640 During his
 lifetime this
 Apostate used
 to consult a
 woman in
 Cairo whose
 belly was the
 resting place of
 evil spirits,
- 1644
- This said[e] woman was a creature,
 The which afforn be cursid Iulian,
 Be his lyue his purpos to recure,
 In sacrificise was offrid to Sathan.
- 1648 and whom he
 afterwards
 offered up in
 sacrifice to
 Satan.
- And so as he with cursidnesse began,
 Swich was his eende, as all bookis tell,
 Whos soule *with* Pluto is buried deepe in hell.
- 1652
- With this tiraunt Bochas gan wex[e] wroth
 For his most odious [hatful] fel outrage,
 And to rehearse in parti he was loth
 The blasfemyes of his fell langage;
 For nouthur furye nor infernal rage
 May be comparid, *with* poisoun fret withynne,
 To the fals venym of this horrible synne.
- 1656 Bochas began
 to grow angry
 with this
 tyrant for his
 outrages and
 blasphemies.
 Neither fury
 nor infernal
 rage can be
 compared to
 blasphemy.
- It is contrarie to alle goode thewes,
 And tofor God most abhomynable;
 Hatful to alle sauff to cursid shrewes:
 For of alle vices verray incomparable,
 Most contagious & most detestable,
 The mouth infect of suich infernal houndis
 Which eueri day sle Crist *with* newe woundis.
- 1660 It is contrary
 to all virtue
 and abomina-
 ble to God.
- 1664
- Folk obstynat of purpos for the nonys,
 Of disposicioun furious & wood,
 Nat afferd to suere [by] Goddis bonys,
 With horrible othes of bodi, flesh & blood,
 The Lord dismembryng, most gracious, most good,
 His feet, his handis, armys, face & hed,
 Reende hym of newe, as thei wolde haue hym ded.
- 1668 Obstinate folk
 of evil disposi-
 tion swear
 horrible oaths
 by God's bones
 his body and
 blood, dismem-
 bering him of
 new, as if
 they would
 again have him
 dead.
- 1672
- The blissid Lord, which is inmortal,
 Thoug thei be dedli, thei wolde hym sle ageyn.
 Thei be erthli; he is celestial;
- 1676 Although they
 are earthly and
 he celestial,
 they have no
 discretion;

1641. ofte] of R. 1643. his] hir H. 1645. feendis] spiritis
 B, J, P — restyng] duellyng B. 1648. his] hir H.
 1657. furye] om. R — nor] nor noon H, R 3, H 5.
 1667. Folkis H. 1669. by] om. R, J. 1672. armys handis H.

In froward wise thei be ouerseyn;
 Discrecioun faileth; ther resoun is in veyn:
 Al suich bla[s]ffemye, for short conclusioun,
 Proceedith of pride & fals ambicioun. 1680

and it seems to me that they are very ungrateful not to do him reverence, who was nailed on a cross and suffered death for their sake.

It seemeth to me, thei haue foule failed
 Of kynd[e]nesse to doon hym reuerence,
 Which for ther loue upon a cros was nailed
 To paie the* raunsoun for mannys gret offence, 1684
 Suffred deth with humble pacience,
 Fals rebukyng, spitting in his visage,
 To bryng mankynde onto his heritage.

It all comes from pride; and Satan is the original cause. Julian was most unfortunate reigning under him.

Fals surquedie that doth the hertis reise 1688
 Of suich blasfemours, as was this Iulian,
 Whos gret empire myht nat countirpeise
 Ageyn that Lord which is bothe God & man.
 Thorigynal ground of pride was Sathan; 1692
 Prince vndir hym most infortunat
 Was this Apostata, regnyng in his estat.

What was the end of this cruel felon? He was miraculously pierced to the heart by a heavenly knight.

What was the eende of this tiraunt horrible,
 This cruel feloun, hatful to eueri wiht? 1696
 Be sodeyn myracle to al his host visible,
 Ther did appeere a verray heuenli kniht,
 Most fresshli armyd & angelik of siht.
 With a sharp spere, sitting on his steede, 1700
 Made the tiraunt his herte blood to bleede.

His false gods could not help him nor all his sorcery and invocations.

His false goddis myhte hym nat auaille,
 His froward offryng doon to maumetrie,
 Nor al his proude imperial apparaille, 1704
 His inuocaciouns nor hatful sorcerye:
 For this Apostata, that did his feith denye,
 Among his knihtis slayn be deth sodeyne;
 His soule dampned with Sathan depe in peyne. 1708

[How the Emperour Valence / slouh heremytes shad
 cristen blood destroyed chirches & after was
 brent.]¹

Bochas next turns to Valens, and first tells us about the perfect holiness

BOCHAS in hast[e] doth his stile dresse
 Next to themperour þat callid was Valence,
 Rehersing first the parfit hoolynesse

1684. the] ther B, R, J. 1685. þe deth H.
 1700. sharp] om. H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 158 recto.

- Of hermytis, that dide ther dilligence 1712 of hermits, who
To lyue in penaunce & in abstynence; forsook this
Forsook the world[e], & for Cristes sake world of vari-
Into desert thei haue the weye take. ance for
Christ's sake,
- In this world heer thei list no lenger tarye, [p. 385] 1716 and lived far
Dyuers & double, of trust noun certeyn; away in the
Ferr in Egipt to lyue solitarye, deserts of
Deepe in desertis, of folk nat to be seyn. Egypt, where
The soil was drye; of vitaille ful bareyn; 1720 the soil was
The frutles treen up sered to the roote: dry and there
For Cristes loue thei thouhte that lyff most soote. was little food.
- This said Valence, of malis frowardli Valens was
To thes hermytes, that lyued in gret penaunce, 1724 without cause
Causeles [to hem] was gret enmy, their enemy.
Troubled hem & did hem gret greuaunce. Wherever he
Lik a tiraunt set al on vengauunce, destroyed
Destroied cherchis with people that he ladde; 1728 churches and
And wher he rood Cristen blood he shadde. shed Christian
blood.
- This mene while be robberyng & rauyne In the mean-
In Mauritayne, which is a gret contre, while a prince
Ther was a prince that callid was Fyryne; 1732 called Firmus
And in Cesarea, a famous gret cite, took upon him-
For his extorsioun & his cruelte self to reign in
He took upon hym, proudli ther regnyng, Cesarea, in
Maugre [the] Romeyns to be crownid kyng. 1736 despite of the
Romans, so
- Theodose the Firste, a manli man, Valens sent out
Was sent out his malys to withstonde Theodosius,
Be the bidding of Valentynyan, co-emperor,
Which that tyme thempire hadde on honde, 1740 against him.
Bothe attonys; but ye shal vndirstonde, Firmus was
Theodose was sent out to assaile slain,
The saide Feryn, and slouh hym in bataille.
- Of which Feryn, be ful cruel hate, 1744 and his head
In that contre presumptuousli regnyng, cut off and set
Smet of his hed & set [it] on the gate up on the gate
Of Cesaria; this was his eending, of Cesarea.
Which be intrusioun afforn was crownid king 1748

1716. lenger] lenger no R.

1722. thei] the R — most] so H.

1725. enmy] envye H. 1728. peeplis H.

1734. 1st his *is erased* H — 2nd his] gret H.

1735. ther] the R. 1737. man] knyht R.

1746. it] om. R. 1747] of Cesaria a Cite of gret bilyng H.

- In Mauritayne, oppressing them be dreed,
As ye haue herd, for which he loste his hed.
- Returning to Valens, Bochas says, that out of froward cursedness to holy church he slew all the hermits; In this mateer Bochas doth nat soiourne
Be non attendaunce nor no long dilligence, 1752
But of purpos doth ageyn retourne
To themperour that callid was Valence,
Which, as I tolde, dide so gret offence
To hooli cherch of froward cursidnesse, 1756
Slouh al hermytes that bood in wildirnesse.
- but God would not suffer such a tyrant to live long. The Goths rebelled for the oppression of one of his princes God wold nat suffre he sholde long endure,
Graunteth no tiraunt to haue heer no long lyff;
For be sum myscheef or sodeyn auenture 1760
Thei deien be moordre, *witb* dagger, suerd or kniff.
The Gothois whilom ageyn hym* gan a stryff, —
For his outrage & gret oppressioun
Thei ageyn Romeyns fill in rebellioun. 1764
- called Maximus, and became so strong that they defeated Valens himself, A prince off his callid Maxymvs
Distressed hem bi so gret tiranye,
Was vpon hem so contrarious,
That thei gadred al ther cheualrie 1768
And wex so strong vpon ther partie,
That bi ther manhod, it fill of auenture,
Thei on Valence made a disconfiture.
- and went on robbing and destroying cities and towns and villages in Thrace. All this while Valens did not cease to persecute the hermits. Spared nat bi robberyng and pillage, 1772
Slouh & brente many statli place,
Cites, touns & many smal village,
That wer famous withynne the lond of Trace.
But al this while Valence gan enchace, 1776
And causeles, of malis voluntarie,
Pursued hermytes that lyued solitarie.
- Collecting a new army, he proudly attacked the Goths, who defeated him again. So he fled and hid in a cottage, And of newe this Valence gan ageyn
Gret multitude of Romeyns to purchase, 1780
And with his host[e] proudli be disdeyn
Ageyn[es] Gothes cam down in-to Trace.
But furiousli thei mette hym in the face,
Wher lik a coward he turned his visage, 1784
To saue his lyff lay hid in a cotage.

1759. to haue] *om.* J, P — no] *om.* J, P.1762. geyn hym whilome H — ageyn hym] *om.* J, P — hym] hem B.

1776. enchace] enhance R.

1779. *This stanza is omitted in J.*

Thus fynalli this emperour Valence,
 As ye haue herd, failed of his entent.
 The Gothes folwed be cruel violence,
 1788 As wilde woluys*, alle of oon assent,
 The hous & hym to asshis thei haue brent.
 Loo, heer the fyn, ye pryncis taketh heede,
 Of tirauntis that* seyntes blood do* sheede! 1792

which the
 Goths set on
 fire, and was
 burnt to ashes.
 That is the end
 of tyrants, who
 shed the blood
 of saints!

[Off kyng Amarycyus / and how Gracyan and
 Theodosie destroyed temples of fals goddis / &
 how gracyan was put to flight.]¹

¶ Aftir Valence, to God contrarious,
 In al his werkis most froward of lyuyng,
 Tofor Bochas cam Amaricus,
 Which of Gothes was whilom lord & kyng, 1796
 Of his gret age pitousli pleynyng,
 Inflat and bolle, list make no delaies,
 Slouh hymself to shorte his greuouse daies.

After Valens,
 Hermanric ap-
 peared before
 Bochas; once
 king of the
 Goths, he grew
 old and
 dropsical and
 finally slew
 himself.

¶ Than cam to Bochas* the brother of Valence, [p.386]
 The myhti emperour callid Gracian, 1801
 Which hadde afforn[e] had experience
 First with his vncler Valentynyan
 In thempire, as bookis telle can; 1804
 And aftirward Theodosie & he
 Hadde gouernaunce of Roome the cite.

Gratian,
 Valens' brother, and
 Theodosius ruled Rome.

Theodosie and Gracian of assent
 Destroyed templis as in that partie 1808
 Of false goddis; thei haue also down rent
 The grete idoles & al suich maumetrye,
 And ful deuoutli gan chirchis edefye.
 And in this while, as Fortune list ordeyne, 1812
 On Maxymvs was vikeer in Breteyne.

They destroyed
 the temples of
 false gods and
 pulled down
 idols and built
 churches at the
 time Maximus
 was governor
 of Britain.

An hardi kniht, al-be he did[e] varie
 From his promys maad be sacrement;
 In Breteyne list no lenger tarie, 1816

Maximus was a
 hardy knight;

1787] In all his werkis most frowarde of entent H.

1789. woluys] beestes B, J, beastes P.

1792. that] the B — do] to B.

1795. Amaricus] Arynacyus H, R 3, Hermernicus P.

1798. bollen H.

1800. to Bochas] down B — brother] nephew P.

1802, 3 are transposed H, R. 1810. mawmentrye H.

1811. deuoute R. 1813. Maxymyan H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 158 verso.

- but, breaking
his oath, he left
Britain and
attacked Gra-
tian
- But into Gaule of hert & hool entent
Geyn Gracian he sodenli is went.
And as it fill, set be ther bothe auys,
Thei hadde a bataille nat ferr out of Parys. 1820
- and put him to
flight near
Paris, through
the bravery of
Merobandus,
one of his
captains.
- This Gracian was ther put to fliht
Bi the prowesse of a proud capteyn
Callid Merobandus, was an hardi kniht,
Which *with* his poweer hath so ouerleyⁿ, 1824
That Gracian was constreyned *in* certeyⁿ,
Whan his poweer myhte nat availe
Geyn Maxymvs, to fleen out of Itaille.
- Maximus was
ambitious to be
sole ruler of
the empire, and
Bochas will tell
how Fortune
threw him
down.
- ¶ This Maxymvs of pride *gan* desire 1828
In his herte be fals ambicioun
To regne allone, & of the hool empire
In his handis to haue pocessioun.
But in what wise Fortune threw *hym* down 1832
With such othir, that be in nou[m]bre fyue,
In this chapitle Bochas doth descryue.
- After Maximus
had slain
Gratian, Theo-
dosius made
war on him
- Ageyn this same tiraunt Maxymvs,
Whan that he hadde slay[e]n Gracian, 1836
The noble *emperour* Theodosius
To venge his deth a werre in hast began,
Because also that Valentynyan
Was wrongli bashed thoruh the cruelte 1840
Of Gracian ful ferr from his contre.
- and his general
Andragathius
who defended
the Alps,
- With Maxymvs to holde up his partie
Was Andragracian, a ful notable kniht,
Which was maad *prince* of his cheualrie, 1844
That took upon hym of *verray* force & myht
To keepe the mownteyns, that no *maner* wiht
With Theodose, army in plate & maile, —
No man sholde ouer the Alpies of Itaille. 1848
- and laying
siege to
Aquileia, took
him prisoner
and slew him.
- Theodose maad a gret arme,
Be grace of God and marcial corage
Leide a seege to Aigle, a gret cite,
And wan the toun, maugre his visage; 1852
Took the tiraunt, and for his gret outrage

1830. the hool empire] al thempire H. 1832. what] that R.

1838. tavenge H — *in* hast a werre R — gan H.

1841. from] out of H.

1842. Maxymyan H — With] Whiche J.

1843. Andragathius P. 1851. Aquile P — a gret] þe H.

Berafft hym first his roial garnement
And slouh hym aftir be rihtful iugement.

Whan Andragracian knew that Maximus,
That was his lord, was slay[e]n in swich wise,
Anon for sorwe, the stori tellith thus,
He drowned hymself, as Bochas doth deuise.
Thus *can* Fortune make folk arise
To thestat of *emperours* atteyne,
With vnwar strok yiue *hym* a fal sodeyne.

1856 Andragathius
drowned
himself
for sorrow.

1860

This Maximvs, of whom I spak tofor,
Tofore his deth[e] made an ordynaunce,
That his sone, which callid was Victor,*
Sholde aftir *hym* gouerne Gaule & Fraunce,
Whom Arbogastes hadde in *gouernaunce* —
A gret constable with Valentynyan —
Slouh this Victor* to regne whan he began.

1864 Before his
death Maximus
had ordered
that his son
Victor should
govern Gaul,
but Victor was
slain by Ar-
bogastes, one
of Valentin-
ian's generals.

1868

[A good processe how Theodosie with praier and
smal noubre gat the victory.]¹

THAN Valentynyan with gret appaile
Bi Arbogastes took pecessioun
Of Lumbardie & of al Itaile,
Brouht al that lond to subieccioun.
Than with his poweer he *cam* to Gaule doun,
Ther resceyuyd with gret solempnite
At Vyenne, a famous old cite.

1872 Valentinian
then took pos-
session of Lom-
bardy and
Italy, and
entering Gaul
was received
with great
pomp at
Vienne.

1876

Arbogastes, of whom I spak now late,
His cheef constable, as ye haue herd deuise,
Of his lord[e] be ful cruel hate
The deth conspired of fals couetise,
Therbi supposyng that he shold arise
Vnto thestat to be chose *emperour*,
Whan he wer ded[e], lik a fals tretour.

1880 Arbogastes,
hoping to be
made emperor,
conspired his
death

Vp in a tour he heeng *hym* traitourli, [p. 387]
[And] to mor sclandre & hyndryng of his name,
Reportid outward and seide cursidli,
This Arbogaste, to hide his owne shame, —
His souereyn lord to putte in mor diffame, —

1884 and hung him
up in a tower,
reporting, to
hide his guilt,
that his lord
had hanged
himself.

1888

1856. Andragathius P. 1862. *hym*] hem R.
1865, 69. Vittor B. 1880. of] bi ful H. 1885. And] om. R.

¹ MS. J. leaf 159 recto.

- Steffi affermed, a thyng that was ful fals,
How he hymself[e] heng up bi the hals.
- Thus lik a moorderer and a fals tretour,
And of condicioun hatful and odious,
Laboured sore to be maad emperour,
That he allone with Eugenivs
Milhte exclude Theodosyus,
First to lette hym, he sholde on no partie
Passe thoruh Itaille nor thoruh Lumbardie.
- Sette espies to brynge hym in a treyne,
Which that tyme, as thei vnderstood,
Lik a iust prynce did his besy peyne,
As he that thouhte nothyng but on good,
In the hilles of Lumbardie abood,
Whom Arbogast, of furious corage,
Cast hym to trouble & stoppen his passage,
- He and Eugenivs beyng of assent
Theodosie mortalli tassaile.
Which whan he knew ther meenyng* fraudulent,
Al-be that he had but scars vitaille,
On eueri cost besette with a bataille,
And of his knihtis forsaken in maneere,
He lefte all thyng & took hym to praiere.
- With hym was left[e] but a smal meyne,
Trewe & feithful in ther affeccioun.
And first of alle he fill doun on his kne
And to *Iesus gan* make his orisoun:
"O Lord," quod he, "thyn eres enclyne doun,
And of thi merciful gracious [hih] godnesse
Delyuere me out of my mortal distresse.
- Considre & see how that I am thi kniht,
Which ofte sithe thoruh my fragilite,
With flesshli lustis bleendid in my siht,
A thousand tymes haue trespasid onto the;
But, gracious *Iesu*, of merci & pite
To my requestis benigneli tak heed
Me to socoure in this gret[e] need.

Thus a murderer and traitor, he sought to reign alone with Eugenius, and endeavouring to exclude Theodosius,

who was in the hills of Lombardy, attacked him there.

Theodosius, scantily provisioned, surrounded by his enemies and deserted by many of his knights, betook himself to prayer.

Falling down on his knee, he said, "O Lord, deliver me out of my distress.

"Consider that although blinded by fleshly lusts I am thy knight.

1901. As] And R — on] *om.* H, J, R 3, P.

1903. Whom] Whilome H.

1907. Which] *om.* R — meenyng] mouyng B. R. H 5.

1909. besette] sett H.

1920. ofte] off R. 1925. in] now in H.

- My trust is hool, pleynli to conclude,
 Thou shalt foorthre & fortune my viage,
 With litil folk ageyn gret multitude
 To make me haue gracious passage,
 Aftir the prouerbe of newe & old langage,
 How that thou maist & kanst thi poweer shewe
 Geyn multitude victorie with a fewe. 1928 1932
- And as thou sauedest whilom Israel
 Geyn Phar[alos] myhti strong puissaunce,
 And fro the leouns delyueredest Danyel,
 And saueddest Susanne in hir mortal greuauunce, 1936
 Saue me this day fro sorwe & myschaunce,
 In this myscheef to grante me this issu,
 Tescape fro daunger be grace of the, Iesu!
- Thi* blissid name be interpretacioun
 Is to seyne most myhti Saueour;
 Ther is no dreed nor dubitacioun
 That Iesus is in al worldli labour
 To al that trust hym victorious protectour. 1940 1944
 Now, blissid Iesu, pauys of my diffence,
 Make me escape myn enmyes violence!
- Lat myn enmyes, that so gret bost do blowe,
 Thouh ther poweer be dreedful & terrible,
 That thei may bexperience knowe
 Ther is to the nothyng impossible, —
 Thou too and thre & oon indiuysible,
 Thouh I with me haue but fewe men,
 Saue me, Iesu, this day fro deth; Amen.” 1948 1952
- ¶ The day gan cleere, the sunne gan shewe briht,
 Whan Theodosie deuoutli lay knelyng,
 And be grace adawen gan his siht
 Fro cloudi wawes of long pitous weeping,
 His souereyn hope set in the heuenli kyng,
 Iesus his capteyn, in whos hooli name
 That day escapid fro myscheef & shame. 1956 1960
- The hooli crosse bete in his armure,
 Born as cheef standard tofor[n] in his bataile;
 God made hym strong[e] in the feeld tendure,
 The holy cross was borne as his chief standard, and God gave him victory.

1935. delyuerest R.
 1937. &] & all H, R 3.
 1940. Thi]This B, R, H 5.
 1954. shewe] shyne R, J.

- Hardi as leoun* his enmyes to assaile; 1964
Iesus his champioun, his plate & eek his maile, —
Iesus allone, set fix in his memorie,
 Be whom that day he hadde the* victorie.
- One of Arbogast's generals, Arbicio, deserted to the side of Theodosius. Ther was a kniht, prince of the cheualrie [p. 388] 1968
 Of Arbogast and [of] Eugenivs,
 Which gouerned al hool[i] ther partie,
 Arbicio callid, manli and vertuous,
 Which goodli cam to Theodosius, 1972
 Did hym reuerence, & with riht glad cheer
 Saued hym that day fro myscheef & daungeer.
- and a miraculous tempest of wind, hail and rain also befell to his advantage. Whan Theodosie upon his foon gan sette,
 Lik a kniht nat turnyng his visage, 1976
 And bothe batailes togidre whan thei mette,
 Of Theodosie texplite the passage
 Fill a myracle to his auantage:
 Be sodeyn tempest of wyndis, hail & reyn 1980
 Troubled all tho that seeged the mounteyn.
- Vulcan bent his guns of thunder and lightning, and Æolus awoke the winds in their caverns. Vlcans, which is cheef smyth of heuene,
 Geyn Arbogastes gan hym reedi make
 To beende his gunnys with thonder & with leuene, 1984
 And Eolus his wyndis gan awake
 Out of the[r] kauernys, hidous, broun & blake;
 Alle of assent be sturdi violence
 With Theodosius stoden at diffence 1988
- The enemy were scattered, their spears broken, their shields riven asunder. Eugenius was taken captive and beheaded; Arbogastes slew himself. Ageyn Eugenivs & Arbogast his brothir,
 Ther people and thei departed heer & yonder
 With wynd and myst, that non of hem sauh oþer,
 Be vnwar vengauce of tempest & of thundir, 1992
 Ther speres tobrak, ther sheeldes roff assonder.
 Eugenivs take, aftir lost his hed,
 [And] Arbogastes slouh hymself for dreed.

1964. leouns B, J.

1965. his] is R.

1967. the] that B.

1968. Ther] Her R — a prince H.

1969. Arbogastes P — 2nd of] om. R, J, R 3, H 5, P.

1970. hooli] hool R, J, H 5, whole P.

1977. bothe] om. R.

1978. texplite H.

1980. tempestes J, P — haile wynde & reyn H.

1981. seeged] passid H. 1986. ther] the H, J.

1987. Alle] And R.

1990. yonder] theer R.

1995. Arbogast P.

- Thus can the Lord of his eternal myht
 Chastise tirauntis & ther malis repressé;
 Saued Theodose, his owne chose kniht:
 Who trustith hym of parfit stabilnesse,
 Goth free fro daungeer, escapeth fro distresse. 2000
 Bookis recorde how Theodosius
 Was in his tyme callid Catholicus.
- This myracle God list for hym werche,
 Made hym victor for his gret meeknesse. 2004
 [Afforn and] afftir founde onto the cherche
 As Cristis kniht; I take onto witnessse
 His submyssioun & his deuout humblesse;
 Of hastynesse whan he was vengable, 2008
 He to the cherch[e] yald hymself coupable.
- The caas was this, as I reherse can:
 In Thesalonica, a famous old cite,
 Beyng bisshop Seynt Ambrose in Melan, 2012
 Certeyn iuges* for to doon equite
 And sitte in doom hauyng auctorite,
 Natwithstandyng ther commyssioun
 Wer slayn be comouns entryng in the* toun. 2016
- Wherof* themperour was nothyng* glad nor fayn,
 But comaunded of hasti wilfulnesse,
 Whan he knew his iuges wer so slayn,
 That his knihtis sholde hem thidir dresse, 2020
 Entre* the cite be cruel sturdynesse,
 With suerd & pollex & daggeres sharpe whette,
 Indifferentli slen al tho þat thei mette.
- Bi whos bidding the cite to encoumbre,
 That day was slayn many an innocent: 2024
 Fyue thousand ded remembrid in that noubre,
 Moordrid in hast withoute iugement
 Bi them that wern vnto* the cite sent. 2028
 But whan Ambrose herde of this cruel deede,
 Lik a iust prelat thus he gan procede:
- As ye haue herd[e] how this vengauunce gan,
 Be Theodosie to chastise the cite, 2032
 The same emperour cam aftir to Melan,

Thus the Lord
 can chastise
 tyrants and
 save those who
 trust in him.

God worked
 this miracle
 and made
 Theodosius
 victorious for
 his great meek-
 ness; and once
 when he was
 revengful he
 afterwards deu-
 otly sub-
 mitted himself
 to the church.

Certain judges
 in Thessalonica
 were slain by
 the commons;
 and the
 emperor in his
 anger

ordered his
 knights to
 enter the city
 and massacre
 the people.

Five thousand
 were mur-
 dered, in-
 cluding many
 innocent.

St. Ambrose
 heard of this
 cruel deed,

and afterwards
 when he met
 Theodosius on
 the porch of

2001. recordeth R. 2012. Milayn H. 2013. iuges] Iewes B.
 2016. in the] into B, R, in to the J. 2017. Wherof] Therof
 B, J — nothyng] nouthur B, H, nothir R 3, nouthyr H 5.
 2021. Entre] Entred B, R, J. 2028. vnto] into B.

- the cathedral church at Milan, he forbade him to enter,
- Wolde haue entrid at a solempnite
The cathedral cherch in his most rialte;
Bisshop Ambrose at the porche hym mette, 2036
And of purpos manli hym withsette.
- saying, "I advise you to go away; you are a cruel homicide and shall not enter this church in spite of your power. You can remain outside for a while.
- Quod the bisshop, "I counseil the withdrawe,
Into this cherch thou shalt haue *non* entre.
Thou hast offendid God and eek his lawe. 2040
Be nat so hardi nor bold, I charge the,
To sette thi foot nor entre in no degre;
Because thou art a cruel homycide,
Maugre thi myht thou shalt a while abide. 2044
- "Go home to your palace and don't let yourself be seen for eight months. God has disdain for all such murderers.
- Vnto thi paleis hom ageyn retourne,
This eihte monethes looke thou be nat seyn;
Passe nat thi boundis, doo meekli ther soiourne:
For, trust me weel and be riht weel *certeyne*, 2048
Al suich moordrers God hath *hem* in disdeyne.
Blood falsli shad, haue this in remembrance,
Callith day and niht to hym to do vengeance.
- "During these eight months do not presume to enter the church,
- Ageyn[e]s the, for this gret offence [p. 389] 2052
Of innocent blood shad ageyn[e]s riht,
Be iust auctorite I yiue this sentence:
This eihte monethes acountid day & niht
To entre the cherch thou shalt nat come in siht, 2056
Resoun shal holde so iustli the ballaunce
Til thou haue fulli acomplissid thi penaunce.
- and take good heed of what I have said; for you'll get no more of me this time, and don't kill any more innocent people."
- What I haue seid[e] tak [t]heerof good heede,
For this tyme thou gest no mor of me. 2060
Withdrawe thyn hand innocent blood to sheede
For any rancour or hasti cruelte."
That to behold the gret humylite
Of themperour, considred euerideel, 2064
It wolde haue perced an herte maad of steel.
- It would have pierced a heart of steel to see the emperor's humility; for bursting into tears and sobs he went home to his penance
- With hed enclyned he spak no woord* ageyn,
Brast on weeping with sobbyng vnstaunchable,
His purpil weede bedewed as with reyn, 2068
Returning hom with cheer most lamentable,
So contynued in his purpos stable,
With al the toknys of feithful repentaunce
In lowli wise acomplished his penaunce. 2072

2039. shal H.

2059. I haue] have I R. 2066. no woord he spak B.

2068. as] all R. 2071. the toknys] om. H.

- Gaf example to princis euerichon
 In caas semblable, that werke of wilfulnesse
 To execucioun for to proceede anon,
 Meynteene ther errour & froward cursidnesse, 2076
 Diffende ther trespas, meynteene ther woodnesse,
 Ferr out of ioynt, yif it shal be declarid,
 To Theodosie for to be comparid.
- To the cherche he meekli did obeye, 2080
 [Lik] Goddis kniht did lowli his penaunce,
 Wher ther be summe that wrongli it werreye,
 Holde therageyn be froward meyntenaunce.
 Touchyng this mateer set heer in remembrance, 2084
 As men disserue, — lat euery wiht tak heede —
 He that seeth al quiteth hem ther meede.
- Theodosivs list nothyng abregge
 To shorte the yerde of his correccioun; 2088
 Forsook the platte, of rigour took the egge,
 Meekli to suffre his castigacioun;
 To bowe his chyne was no rebellioun,
 Bi meek confessioun knowyng his trespas, 2092
 Be Seynt Ambrose restored ageyn to grace.
- Virtuous princis may example take
 Of Theodose, how thei the Lord shal queeme,
 He nat froward amendis for to make, 2096
 His sceptre, his suerd, his purple, his diadeeme
 Soget to Ambrose, what hym list to deeme,
 Obeied al thying; & for his gret offence
 To hooli cherch to make recompence. 2100
- He knew[e] that God was his souereyn Lord,
 To hooli cherch how gretli he was bounde,
 Gruchched neuer in thouht, will nor woord,
 Hooli on Crist his empire for to founde. 2104
 Wher vertu regneth, vertu wil ay rebounde;
 And for this prince obeied tal vertu,
 Hath now his guerdoun aboute with Crist Iesu.

with a most lamentable face. An example to princes, who out of perverse cursedness defend their trespasses.

He obeyed the church and meekly did his penance, in contrast to those who wrongly resist,

and, accepting his punishment to the full, was finally restored to grace.

Virtuous princes may take example of Theodosius, how they shall conciliate the Lord. He subjected himself to Ambrose

and holy church without complaint, and now has his reward with Christ above.

2078. Ferr] fore H, For R 3 — it] all H.

2081. Lik] om. R, J.

2082. it] om. H.

2087. nothyng] no while H.

2093. Be] om. H — restored] restorde hym H.

2099. his] this H.

2105. ay wil R.

2106. tal] to al H, callid R.

2107. his] om. H.

[How knightys and gentylmen chese Aleryk kyng /
and comouns chese Radagasus whiche ended in
myschef.]¹

- All peoples are descended from Noah and his three sons, as the Bible says. From Japhet came seven nations: 2108
- IT is remembrid of antiquite,
In the Bible, aftir Noes flood,
How bi dissent[e] of his sonis thre,
Of ther lynage pleyntli and ther blood
Al kynreedis dilatid been abrod; 2112
And [in] myn auctour, as it is maad[e] mynde,
Of Iaphet cam seuen nacions, as I fynde.
- Gaul, Galatia, the Goths, Italians, Tyre, Scythia and Thrace. 2116
- The people first of Gaule & Galathe,
Of Magoth Gothes & folkis of Itaile,
Tire, Sithia, with many gret contre
Stondyng in Asia, as be rehersaile;
But in Europe stant Trace, it is no faile. 2120
Gothes, Sithiens of purpos did ordeyne
Among hemsilff[e] gouernour[e]s tweyne:
- In Thrace the Goths and Scythians had two governors, Alaric, chosen by the gentry, and Radagaisus, chosen by the commons. 2124
- Knihitis, gentilmen chose* Alericus
To be ther prince and haue the souereynthe,
Wher the comouns chose Radagasus.
The Gothes first, for grettest surete,
With kyng Alerik been entred þe cite,
Into Roome to fynde ther socour,
That tyme Honorius beyng emperour. 2128
- The emperor Honorius granted Alaric Gaul, Spain and France, but Stilicho was sent down against him afterwards, 2132
- Be graunt of whom, al the hool contre
Youe to Alerik, of Gaule, Spaigne & France,
Ther for tabide & holde ther his see,
Gothes, Spay[g]nolffs vndir his obeissaunce,
Takyng on hym al the gouernaunce,
Til Stillicon out of the occident
To meete with them was doun fro Roome sent,
- and Alaric put him to flight. 2136
- That tyme Honorie beyng emperour. [p. 390]
Stillicon gan Allerik enchace
With many a proud[e] sturdi soudeour,
For to fihte thei chose haue ther place;

2122. chosen B — Alaricus R, P, R 3, Alaricas H.

2124. Radagusus H. 2127. ther] their H.

2130. Spayn Gaule & Fraunce H.

2135. them] hym R.

2139. place] space R.

¹ MS. J. leaf 160 recto.

- But Allerik stood so in the grace 2140
 Of Fortune, that be verray myht
 Stillicon he putte vnto the fliht.
- Radagasus and Alerik of assent 2144
 Haue concludid and ful accordid be
 Thoruh Itaille for to make her went
 Toward Roome, and entre that cite,
 Mauge Romeyns to haue the souereynte. 2148
 Tofor ther entring gan the toun manace,
 The name of Rome to chaungen & difface.
- For euermor the toun to doon a shame
 Ther purpos was, as ye haue herd deuisse;
 First of alle to chaungen the touns name, 2152
 Dempt themsilff hable to that emprise.
 But Fortune thouhte al othirwise,
 Lik hir maneeres to do most damage,
 Whan she to men sheweth fresshest hir visage. 2156
- Hir condiciouns be nat alwey oon;
 Stoundemeel of custum she can varie;
 For she was first froward to Stillicon,
 And to Radagasus eft ageyn contrarie: 2160
 In o poynt, she list[e] neuer tarie,
 To Radagasus hir fauour did faille,
 Be Stillicon he venquissid in bataille.
- Al his pride myht nat make hym speede;
 Fortune list[e] so for hym ordeyne,
 That he was fayn, at so streiht a neede,
 To flee for socour to an hih mounteyne,
 Of al vitaille nakid & bareyne, 2168
 Wher for hunger he felte so gret greef,
 Nih al his peple deide at* myscheeff.
- Of al socour destitut and bareyn,
 Sauh no remedie, took hym to be fliht; 2172
 Be the Romeyns he was so ouerleyn,
 Take at myscheeff, & maugre al his myht
 In cheynis bounde & dampned anon riht
 For to be ded; his peple, as it is told, 2176
 Many on slayn, summe take & summe wer sold.

Radagaisus
 and Alaric
 then decided
 to conquer
 Rome, and
 threatened
 to change
 its name, to
 the disgrace
 of the
 Romans.

They thought
 themselves
 able to do this;
 but Fortune
 thought
 otherwise.

Although she
 had been frow-
 ward to Stili-
 cho, she now,
 favoured him.
 Radagaisus
 was defeated,

and fled to a
 mountain,
 where his
 soldiers died
 of hunger;

and finally he
 was captured
 and sentenced
 to death.

2146. that] be H.

2149. chaungen] daunger R.

2161-63 are transposed in H, but correction indicated.

2170. at] for B.

No one was more proud than king Radagaisus. His power did not last long.

Ther was no[n] prouder nor mor surquedous
 In thilke dayes, pleyntli to descryue,
 Than was this said[e] kyng Radagasus, 2180
 Which took on hym with Romeyns for to stryue.
 His poweer short, was ouertourned blyue;
 For Fortune of malys hadde a lust
 To slen this tiraunt with hunger & with thrust. 2184

He was vain-glorious because people called him king of the Goths. His memory was soon forgotten.

Among[es] othir proud[e] princis alle
 Reioysshed hymself bamaner [of] veynglorie,
 Because that men in contres ded hym calle
 Kyng of Gothes; short is the memorie 2188
 Of hym rehersed or writyn in historie, —
 To yiue exauple, in deede men may fynde
 The name of tirauntes is soone put out of mynde.

[How Ruffyne chamberleyn with Theodosie vsurped to be Emperour and therefore by honoryus dampned & his heed smet of.]¹

High climbing up by usurpation to imperial estate has often a sudden fall.

HIH clymbyng vp haþ ofte an vnwar fall 2192
 And specialli whan it is sodeyne,
 Fro lowh degre testat imperiall,
 Whan fals ambicioun the ladder doth ordeyne,
 Be vsurpacioun presumptuousli tatteyne 2196
 Aboue the skies with his hed to perse;
 Fro whens he cam wer shame to rehearse.

And this is especially true of those men whose beginnings are often a shame to rehearse—men who do not wish to know themselves, like Rufinus,

I meene as thus; al suich hasti clymbyng
 Of them that list nat hemsilf for to knowe 2200
 And haue forgete the ground of þer gynnyng,
 Be froward fame with worldli wyndis blowe,
 To reise ther name* boue Sagittaries bowe, —
 Record on Ruffyn*, which proudli gan desire 2204
 Be fals intrusioun to occupie thempire.

once an officer of Theodosius, who tried to become emperor by intrusion.

The which Ruffyn was whilom chaumbirleyn
 With Theodosie, and holde a manli kniht;
 Yit in o thyng he was foul ouerseyn, 2208

2180. kyng] *om.* R. 2181. took] *om.* R — on] vpon H.
 2189. historie] memorie H. 2194. testat] to thestate H.
 2197. skies] sterris R — with his hed] his hede with H, R 3.
 2199. as] *om.* H. 2202. worldli] clowdy H.
 2203. names B, J — aboue H.
 2204. Ruffyn] Ruffia B, R, J — on] off R.
 2206. whilome was H. 2207. and] was R.

¹ MS. J. leaf 160 verso.

- Be couetise bleendid in his siht
 To spende his labour, & hadde no ground of riht.
 Be themperour Honorius he was sent
 For to gouerne al the orient. 2212
- Bi processe Ruffyn was maad vikeer,
 Callid aftir vikeer Imperial,
 Took upon hym hooli and enter
 Be auctorite, [as] cheef and princepal, 2216
 Hymself allone to gouernen al,
 As most hable; thus he dede deeme,
 Beforn all othir to were a diadeeme;
- Of hymself so moche he ded[e] make, [p. 391] 2220
 In port and cheere [the] most ambitious.
 At Constantynople vnwarli he was take,
 First bounde in cheynys and aftir seruid thus:
 Be trewe iugement of Honorivs, 2224
 His hed smet of and his* riht hand in deede;
 This was his eende; of hym no mor I reede.

He was sent by Honorius to the East and called Vicar Imperial. Afterwards he seized the whole empire

and made much of himself; but he was taken in Constantinople and bound in chains, and his head and right hand were cut off.

[How Stillicon and othir of lik condicion ended in myscheff.]¹

- AFFTIR whos deth to Bochas ther cam oon,
 Swich another lik of condicioun, 2228
 Afforn remembrid, callid Stellicon,
 Whos sone Euterius, as maad is mencion,
 Purposed hym to haue pocessioun
 Of thempire hool; pley[n]li thus he thouhte, 2232
 And bi what mene the weie his fadir souhte.
- Compendiusli to tellyn of thes tueyne,
 Fro dyuers contres toward Septemptrioun
 To gadre peple, thei dide her besi peyne, 2236
 Of many dyuers straunge nacioun.
 Ageyn Honorivs thei cam togidre doun,
 [And] as thei mette, Fortune made hem faille,
 Bothe attonys slay[e]n in bataille. 2240

Stilicho next appeared to Bochas. His son Eucherius proposed that they should take possession of the Empire;

so they collected an army of various peoples and were defeated and slain by Honorius.

2209. Be] to H.

2223. aftir] aftirward R.

2225. hed] he R — his] in his B.

2230. Eucherius P.

2239. And as] All R, and H, R 3 — made] dyd R.

¹ MS. J. leaf 160 verso.

- Their evil beginning had an evil end. Constans and his father Constantine also took upon themselves to usurp power in the Empire.
- Ther gynnynge cursid hadde a wengable fyn;
Aftir whos deth I reede of othir tweyne:
¶ Of oon Constans, his fadir Constantyn,
Which Constantyn took on hym in certeyne 2244
To regne in Gaule, and aftir that ordeyne,
In that contre to be gouernour,
Ther to contynve as lord and emperour.
- Constans turned monk, but his father had him taken out and made a knight.
- His sone Constans kaute a deuocioun 2248
Of conscience, and forthwith anon riht
Was shaue a monk, & made his professioun.
His fadir aftir of verray force & myht
Leet take hym out, gaf hym the ordre of kniht; 2252
Both of assent gan make hemsiluen strong
Toppresse the contre & do the peple wrong.
- Both of them then oppressed the people, and, joining together with one Gerontius,
- This said[e] Constans, as myn auctour seith,
Was confederat, of hatful cruelte, 2256
With oon Herencivs, assuraunce maad & feith,
As brethre suorn for mor auctorite.
And for to make the noumbre up of thre,
Constantyn was sworn with hem also 2260
To been al oon in what thei hadde ado.
- conquered many cities in Spain. Gerontius traitorously slew Constans,
- Thes said[e] thre sworn and Ioynd thus,
Conquered in Spaigne many gret cite;
But in this while this seid Herencivs, 2264
Traitour and fals, ful of duplicite,
His fellawe slouh ageyn his oth, parde.
Thus was Constans thoruh fals collusioun
Of Herencivs moordred be tresoun. 2268
- and shortly afterwards he himself was killed by his own soldiers. As a rule men receive their just reward.
- Herencivs aftir lyued but a while;
Be his owne knihtis he slay[e]n was also.
Fraude for fraude; deceit is quit *with* gile;
It folweth euer & gladli cometh therto: 2272
Men resceyue ther guerdouns as thei doo.
Lat men alwey haue this in remembraunce,
Moordre of custum wil eende with myschaunce.
- Among others who ended in mischief were Attalus and Heraclian,
- ¶ Among suich othir, thus ending in myscheef, 2276
Cam Attalus and oon Eraclyan;
For no prowesse, but to ther gret repreeff

2241. Ther] The R. 2250. &] om. H, R 3.

2257. Herencius] Heroncyus H, R 3, henricius J, Gerontius P.

2261. ado] to do R. 2262. Ioynd R, H. 2264, 68. Gerontius P.

2275. wil eende] eendith H. 2277. and] an R.

- Remembrid heer; ther stori telle can,
 Ageyn Romeyns whan thei rebell[e] gan,
 Be Honorivs afforn maad officeeres
 And of thempire callid cheef vikeres. 2280
- who rebelled
 against
 Honorius.
- First Attalus for his tirannye,
 Whan he in Gaule was maad [a] *gouvernour*,
 Went into Spaigne with a gret *companye*,
 Did his peyne and fraudulent labour
 Be fals sleihte to be maad *emperour*. 2284
 Take and bounde, exilid for falsnesse,
 His hand smet of, eendid in wrechidnesse. 2288
- Attalus tried
 to be made
 emperor in
 Spain and was
 exiled and his
 hand cut off.
- OFF Eraclyan the ende was almost lik,
 Yit was he promot to gret prosperite,
 Maad *gouvernour* & lord of [al] Affrik,
 Of consuleer roos to the dignite, 2292
 Rood thoruh Libie and many gret contre,
 With thre thousand shippes gan to saille
 And with seuene hundrid taryue [vp] in Itaille. 2296
- Heraclian,
 governor of
 Africa, became
 a consul and
 attempted to
 invade Italy
 with 3700
 ships.
- Swich noumbre of shippis neuer afforn was* seyn,
 Lik as it is acountid be writyng;
 His naue passed the naue in certeyne
 Of myhti Xerses, that was of Perse kyng,
 Or Alisaundre; but yit in his comyng,
 Toward Itaille whan he sholde aryve,
 The se and Fortune gan ageyn hym stryve. 2300
- His navy
 was larger
 than that of
 mighty Xerxes
 or Alexander.
- At his arryuaile he hadde a sodeyn dreed, [p. 392] 2304
 Cause Honorius had sent down a capteyn,
 Constancivs callid, *gouvernour* and hed
 Of al the Romeyns, to meete hym on the pleyyn;
 For which Eraclyan *tournid* is ageyn,
 As I fynde, gan take his passage
 Toward the cite that callid is Cartage. 2308
- When he
 arrived, he
 lost courage
 because Hono-
 rius had
 sent down
 Constantius
 to give him
 battle, and
 sailed for
 Carthage,
- Thus Fortune list hir power shewe:
 Or he *cam* fulli to that noble toun,
 With sharpe] *suerdis* he was al to-hewe
 Among his knihtis thoruh fals occasioun*
 As thei fill at a discencioun. 2312
- where he was
 cut to pieces
 by his knights.

2292. al] *om.* R.2297. was] *wer* B, *were* J.2312. noble] *om.* R. 2314. occasioun] *collusioun* B2315. at] as R — a] *om.* H.

Of intrusioun began first this quarell, 2316
Ageyn Romeyns whan that he gan rebell.

¶ **Bochas rehersith here be whom Rome cam to nougte.¹**

Almost every prince whose story Bochas told in his Eighth Book ended in wretchedness,

OFF many myscheuys heer afforn rehersid,
Summe drawe along & summe shortli told,
And hou Fortune hath hir wheel reuersid, 2320
Be tragedies remembrid manyfold
Toforn be Bochas, of princis yong & old,
In the eihte* book rehersid the processe,
Echon almost eendid in wrechidnesse. 2324

especially those who tried to become emperor without just title. Yet the estate of emperor has gone to ruin,

Namli all tho that dide most desire
Be wrong title themsilff to magnefie,
To haue lordshipe & gouerne the empire,
Thestat imperial proudli to occupie. 2328
Which estat, pleynli to specefie,
As ferr as Pheebus doth in his speere shyne
Among al lordshipe is drawe onto ruyne.

and Rome came to nought, as John Bochas rehearses.

Fro myn auctour me list[e] nat discorde 2332
To telle the ground whi Roome is com* to nouht;
Be an exauple I cast me to recorde
What was cheef cause, yiff it be weel souht,*
Be a stori that cam onto the thouht 2336
Of Iohn Bochas, which, as ye shal lere,
Ful notabli is rehersed heer.

It happened in the time of Odoacer, a king and a great governor, yet a ravenous robber,

Which exauple and stori rehersyng,
Ceriousli folwyng myn auctour, 2340
Odoacer, whilom a famous kyng,—
A kyng be name & a gret gouernour,
But of his lyuyng a rauynous robbour,
Out of whos court wer merci & pite 2344
Banshed for euere with trouthe & equite.

2316. this] the R.
2319. along] long R.
2323. eihte] seuent R, vijte H 5, viijte B.
2331. lordshippis R. 2333. is com] cam B, J.
2335. out souht B, J. 2336. the] his H.
2337. Of] bi H. 2339. and] in H.
2340. folwen H.

¹ *The following chapter-heading is in MS. J. leaf 161 recto: "A good processe why Rome was destroyed / and for the same or like cause many other Rewmes."*

- In that regioun wher *merci* is nat vsid,
 And trouthe oppressid is with tyrannye,
 And rihtwisnesse be poweer is refusid, 2348
 Fals extorsioun supporteth robberie,
 And sensualite can haue the maistrie
 Aboff resoun, be toknes at a preeff,
 Which many a lond haue brouht onto myscheeff. 2352
- Ther is no rewme may stonde in surete,
 Ferme nor stable in verrey existence,
 Nor contune in long prosperite,
 But yif the throne of kyngli excellence 2356
 Be supportid with iustise and clemence
 In hym that shal as egal iuge stonde
 Tween riche & poore, with sceptre & suerd* *in honde*.
- A cleer exauple, this mateer for to grounde, — 2360
 So as a fadir that is naturall,
 Or lik a moodir which kynd[e]li is bounde
 To fostre ther childre in epspecial,
 Riht so a kyng in his estat roiall 2364
 Sholde of his offis dilligentli entende
 His trewe leeges to cherisshe [hem] & diffende.
- Be good exauple his sogettis tenlumyne;
 For temporal rewmys sholde, as in figure, 2368
 Resemble the kyngdam which [that] is dyuyné,
 Be lawe of God & lawe eek of nature,
 That *res publica* long tyme may endure,
 Void of discord and fals duplicite, 2372
 As* o bodi in long prosperite.
- Nouthur ther regne nor domynacioun
 Haue of themsilff non other assuraunce;
 Thestat of kynges gan be permyssioun 2376
 Of Goddis grace & of his purueyaunce,
 Be vertuous lyff and moral gouernaunce,
 Long to contune bothe in pes and werre
 Lik her desertis, & punshe hem whan thei erre. 2380
- Thei sholde be the merour and the liht, [p. 393]
 Transcende al othir be vertuous excellence,
 As examplaires of equite and riht,

without mercy
 or pity.
 Many a land
 has been
 brought to
 ruin when
 sensuality has
 the mastery
 of reason.

No realm
 can stand
 secure unless
 the throne
 is supported
 by clemency
 and justice.

Just as fathers
 and mothers
 are bound
 to foster their
 children, so
 should kings
 cherish and
 defend their
 subjects,

giving
 them a good
 example; and
 temporal
 kingdoms
 ought to
 resemble
 the kingdom
 that is divine.

There is no
 other assurance
 for them; in-
 asmuch as the
 estate of kings
 began by the
 permission of
 God; and God
 will treat
 them as they
 deserve.

Kings should
 excel all other
 men in virtue
 and discretion;

2346. nat] na H. 2348. be] with H.
 2359. suerd & sceptre B, J. 2363. special H.
 2366. hem] om. J, P, H 5. 2369. that] om. R.
 2373. As] Of B, J. 2374. nor] no H.

- So be discrecioun of natural prouidence 2384
 To tempre ther rigour with merci & clemence;
 What shal falle afforn[e] caste al thynges,
 As apperteneth to princis & to kynges.
- they must remember the past and prepare for things to come and resist vices. Thynges passed to haue in remembrance, 2388
 Conserue wisli thynges in presence,
 For thynges to come afforn mak ordenaunce,
 Folwe the trais of vertuous contynence,
 Ageyn all vices to make resistence 2392
 Be the vertu of magnanymyte,
 Which is approprid to imperial mageste,
- They should be stable in joy and adversity, Brothir to force, auctours seyn echon,
 Which conserueth the roial dignite 2396
 In suich a mene stable as eny ston, —
 Nat ouer glad for no prosperite,
 Nor ouer sad for non aduersite;
 For lyff nor deth his* corage nat* remewe 2400
 To God and man to yeld hem that is dewe.
- arm themselves against fleshly lusts and exclude all slanderous people, flatterers and ribalds from their palaces. Geyn flesshli lustis arme hym in sobirnesse,
 Voide al surfetis of froward glotonye,
 Gredi appetites be mesure to repressse, 2404
 Out of his hous auoide al ribaudie,
 Rowners, flaterers and such folk as kan lie,
 War in his doomys he be nat parciall,
 To poore doon almesse, to vertuous liberall. 2408
- In their dress they should shew themselves kings; but virtuous living deserves more praise than clothing. In his array shewe hym lik a kyng
 From other princis bamaner difference,*
 So that men preise his vertuous lyuyng
 Mor than his clothing, ferr from his presence; 2412
 And let hym thynken in his aduertence,
 Truste theron, verraily certeyn,
 As he governeth men wil reporte & seyn.
- For companions let them have notable, experienced princes, who know the difference between good and evil; Lat hym also for his gret avail 2416
 Haue such aboute hym to be in presence,
 Notable princis to be of counsail,
 Swich as toforn haue had experience
 Tuen good and euel to knowe the difference. 2420

2385. with merci] *om.* H. 2392. to] an H, *om.* R 3.

2394. to] to be H. 2400. his] my B — nat] to B.

2403. of] and R. 2405. hous] thouht H, R 3.

2410. difference] apparence B, J. 2411. that] *om.* R.

2414. verraily] verrey H.

And sixe thynges, hatful of newe & old,
To banshe hem out in hast from his houshold.

¶ First them that loue to lyue in idilnesse,
As such as nouthur loue God nor dreede, 2424 and they must
Coueitous people that poore folk oppresse,
And them also that doon al thyng for meede,
And symulacioun, clad in a double weede, 2428 not be idle,
And such as can for ther auauntages covetous, de-
Out of oon hood[e] shewe too visages. ceitful, or

Lat hym also uoid out at his gate
Riotous people that loue to wachche al niht, 2432 riotous, with
And them also that vse to drynke late, late drinking
Ly longe abedde til ther dyner be diht, and lying long
And such as list nat of God to haue a siht, abed, or have
And rekles folk that list nat heere masse, about them
Tauoide his court, & let hem lihtli passe. 2436 reckless people
who do not go
to mass.

For suich defaultis, rehersed heer tofor, 2440 Not only
Nat onli Roome, but many gret contre Rome but
Hath be destroyed & many kyndam lorn, many another
In olde cronicles as ye may reed & see. kingdom has
Fals ambicioun, froward duplicite been destroyed
Hath many a rewme & many a lond encloied, for such faults:
And been in cause whi thei haue be destroyed.

Iherusalem was whilom transmygrat, 2444 Jerusalem be-
Ther trewe prophetis for thei hadde in despiht; cause the Jews
And Baltazar was eek infortunat, scorned their
For he in Babiloun folwed al his deliht, true prophetis;
Darye in Perse had but smal respiht, Belshazzar for
Sodenly slayn and moordred be tresoun, his luxury in
The same of Alisaundre whan he* drank poisoun. 2448 Babylon;
Darius was
suddenly slain,
and Alexander
poisoned.

Discord in Troye groundid on couetise,
Whan be fals tresoun sold was Palladioun; 2452 Troy was lost
Roome and Cartage in the same wise by covetous-
Destroyed wern, for short conclusioun, ness;
Among hemsilff for ther dyuisioun, Rome and
Rekne othir rewmys that been of latter date, 2456 Carthage were
As of dyuisiouns in France that fill but late. destroyed by
civil strife,
such as fell
but late in
France.

2424. nouthur] nouthis R. 2427. a] om. R.
2428, 29. auauntage, visage H. 2430. uoid] avoid H.
2439. many a H. 2442. both a's om. H, 2nd a om. R.
2443. been in cause] be the cause R.
2450. he] that he B, H, R. 2452. sold] slayn H.
2457. of] in H — in] of H.

- The chief fault has been in the ruling princes; and I shall tell as an example the story of Odoacer.
- Al thes defaultis rehersid heer breefli,
 Outsoult the roote & weied in balaunce,
 Cheeff occasioun, to telle bi and bi, 2460
 Hath been in princis that haue had gouernaunce.
 And speciali to putte in remembraunce,
 For an example telle as kometh to mynde
 Of Odoacer the stori, as I fynde. 2464
- He was born in Pannonia, and as he had no ancestry he began a conquest of theft and robbery.
- Born in Prevs and hardi of corage, [p. 394]
 At his begynnyng hymself to magnefie,
 Thoug no mencion be maad of [his] lynage,
 Hauyng no title of blood nor auncetrie,* 2468
 His conquest gan of theffte and robberye,*
 Gadred peeple of sondri regiouns,
 Entred Itaille with many naciouns.
- He invaded Hungary and defeated Orestes, who fled to Pavia
- With his soudiours first he gan assaille, 2472
 With multitude entryng anon riht,
 Kyndames of Hungry & contres of Itaille;
 Mette in his passage with a Romeyn kniht
 Callid Horestes, in steel armyd briht: 2476
 The feeld was take and put in iupartie;
 Horestes fledde for socour to Pauye.
- and was there taken prisoner and afterwards slain.
- Streihthli beseged and the toun Iwonne,
 Fond for the tyme non othir cheuisaunce, 2480
 The nexte morwe at risyng of the sunne,
 Bounde in cheynis tencres of his greuaunce,
 Sent to a cite that callid was Plesaunce,
 Ageyn[e]s whom Odoacer was so fell, 2484
 Leet hym be slayn be iugement ful cruel.
- Odoacer then marched on Rome and was crowned king of Italy.
- Aftir whos deth, be sodeyn violence
 Odoacer is passid thoruh Itaille,
 Entred Roome, fond no resistance; 2488
 For ther was non to yiue hym bataille.
 Zeno themperour durste hym nat assaille,
 So that be force and rauynous werkyng
 Of al Itaille he was crownid kyng. 2492

2461. Hath] Have H.

2467. his] *om.* R.2468. of blood nor auncetrie] but theffte and robberye B, J.
 2469. gan of theffte and robberye] gannat of blood nor
 auncetrie B, gan nought of blood and auncetrie J.2474. Kyngdam H, R 3, Kyngdom P. 2478. to] *in* to H.2482. in] *with* H.

2490. durste] did H.

2491. rauynour R.

- Hadde al Roome vndir subieccioun,
 Fortune a while list [hym] nat [to] faille,
 Zeno therof hadde indignacioun,
 Gan werke ageyn hym, in hope it sholde [a]uaile.²⁴⁹⁶
 And therupon the lordship of Itaille
 He gaf of purpos, his power committynge,
 To Theodorik, that was of Gothes kyng.
- So that Theodorik in hope to haue victorie,
 Ageyn Odoacer gan make resistence; 2500
 And his name to putte[n] in memorie,
 Took vpon hym be knihtli excellence
 For the Romeyns to stonde[n] in diffence. 2504
 Mette hym proudli with his cheualrie
 Beside a ryueer that callid was Sowcye.
- With ther batailles togidre whan thei mette,
 Beside Leglere that stant in Lumbardie, 2508
 With round[e] speres & sharp swerdis* whette,
 Odoacer, for al his tyrannye,
 Was put to fliht, discournted his partie.
 And Fortune than, [which] can best chaunge & varie,
 At vnset hour was to hym contrarie. 2513
- Hym & his power the Romeyns haue defied;
 He brente her vynes and tour[e]s environn,
 Because the entre was to hym denyed, 2516
 And to Rauenne he is descendid down.
 But maugre hym he was take in that* toun
 Be Theodorik; lat ech tiraunt tak heed,
 Odoacer comaundid to be ded. 2520
- ¶ Myn auctour Bochas of entencioun,
 For the tyme, as kam to remembraunce,
 Toward Romeyns maketh a digressioun,
 To them recordynge the gret[e] variaunce, 2524
 The vnwar chaunges, the gery contenance
 Of Fortunis fals transmutacioun,
 Thes same woordis rehersyng to the toun.

The Emperor
 Zeno resigned
 his power to
 Theodorik the
 Goth,

who attacked
 Odoacer on the
 Sontius

in Lombardy
 and defeated
 him.

Retreating
 through Italy,
 Odoacer laid
 waste the land,
 but was finally
 captured in
 Ravenna and
 (let every
 tyrant take
 heed)
 beheaded.

My author
 now makes a
 digression,
 recording the
 many vicissi-
 tudes of
 Rome.

2494. hym] *om.* J — list hym nat to faille] was to hym favour-
 able H, R 3 — to] *om.* R, J.

2497. the] ther R. 2501. Ageyn] Geyn R.

2504. in] at H. 2508. legle H.

2509. swerdis] speres B. 2512. which] *om.* R.

2515. toures] touns R.

2518. that] the B, J.

2519. tiraunt] man H.

2525. guery R, H.

¶ The wordes* of Bochas a-geyne Rome.¹

Rome, remember the days of your greatness. You once shone like a sun through the world; now all is turned to ruin.

REMEMBRE o Roome & calle ageyn to mynde 2528
 The daies passid of thi felicite,
 Pi* marcial conquest, þi triumphes left behynde,
 Thi grete victories most of auctorite,
 Thi famous laudes songe in ech contre, 2532
 Which like a sonne* thoruh al þe world did shyne,
 Now al attonis is turnid to ruyne!

Your lordship extended from east to west; but the golden letters of your name are now darkened and defaced.

From est to west thi lordship did atteyne,
 Aboue al poweers most excellent & roiall; 2536
 But now fro Roome down into Almayne
 Thestat translatid which is imperial;
 Name of thi senatours, name in especial,
 The golden lettres dirkid & diffacid, 2540
 And from remembrance almost out araced.

City of cities, to which the Alps and all the mountains of Lombardy were once subject

Cite of cites, whilom most glorious, [p. 395]
 And most fresshli flouryng in cheualrie,
 To which the Alpies & mounteyns most famous 2544
 Wer lowli soget of al Lumbardie,
 Til that discord, dyuisioun and envie
 Among yoursilf hath clipped the brihtnesse,
 Bi a fals serpent brouht in bi doubilnesse. 2548

and kings and princes tributary, you were brought to nought when divided against yourself.

Kynges, princis wer to the tributarye,
 Of al prosperite so fulsum was the flood,
 Among yoursilf til ye began to varie, 2552
 The world[e] thoruhout soget to you stood,
 Til ye gan shewe too facis in o hood:
 What folwed aftir, Fortune hath so prouided,
 Ye cam to nouht whan ye gan be deuyded.

Lacking in prudent senators, in knighthood and soldiers, the community stood desolate;

Vnpurueied of prudent senatours, 2556
 Thi marchaundise turnid to pouerte,
 Of knihthod bareyn, nakid of soudiours,
 Disconsolat stant al thi comounte,
 Tour[e]s, wallis broke of thi cite, 2560

2530. Pi] Pat B, þe H.

2533. a sonne] be report B, R, H 5 (whiche thurgh all the world by report did shyne J).

2537. into] in R. 2541. out racid R.

2542. most whilom R.

2549. to] om. R. 2553. o] oon H.

¹ wordes] workis B.

That whilom wer a paradis of deliht, —
 Now al the world hath the but *in* despiht.
 Cause, to conclud, of al thi wrechidnesse,—
 Fals ambicioun, pride and lecherie, 2564
 Dyuysioun, malicious doubilnesse,
 Rancour, hatred, couetise [&] envie,*
 Which set aside al good[e] policie;
 In breek rehersed, for short conclusioun, 2568
 Haue be cheeff ground of thi destruccioun.

and now all the
 world has you
 in contempt.

Your
 wretchedness
 arose from
 false ambition,
 pride, lechery,
 division,
 deceit, anger,
 hatred,
 covetousness
 and envy.

[How the kynges Trabstila and Busarus were brouht
 to subieccioun and made tributaryes to Theo-
 deryk.]¹

AFFTIR thes myscheuys told of Rome toun,
 Cam Trabstila kyng of Gepidois
 With other tweyne, as maad is mencion: 2572
 Busar that was kyng of Bulgarois,
 With Pheletevs, regnyng in Ragois.
 Alle thes thre, breeffli for to seyne,*
 Cam attonys to Bochas to compleyne, 2576
 Ther rewmys stondyng toward Septemtrioun.
 And to remembre of the firste tweyne,
 Wer brouht attonis to subieccioun
 Bi Theodorik, that did his besi peyne 2580
 Them to conquere, & proudli did ordeyne
 That thei wer neuer hardi to rebell
 Ageyn* Romeyns nor take no quarell.
 To Theodorik thei wer maad tributarye, 2584
 Most wrechchidli bounde[n] in seruage,
 Neuer so hardi aftir for to varie
 In peyne of deth duryng al ther age.
 Of seruitute, loo, heer the surplusage,— 2588
 Of all wrechchis most wrechchid thei be founde,
 Thei that to thraldam constreyned been & bounde.

After these
 calamities
 told of Rome,
 Trasilla,
 king of the
 Gepidae,
 Busar, king
 of the Bulgars,
 and Philete,
 king of the
 Rugii, all of
 whom reigned
 in the north,
 came com-
 plaining to
 Bochas.

The first two
 were con-
 quered by
 Theodoric

and bound
 wretchedly
 in servage.

2566. *is transposed after 2568 in B, but correction indicated.*

2569. be] the R. 2571. Trasilla P.

2573. Busa P, Busarus J.

2574. Pheteus H, Philitheus P, J — Rugiois P.

2575. seyne] feyne B.

2583. Ageyns B.

2590. Thei that] That thei R — that] to þat H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 162 verso.

Virtuous freedom is the greatest of treasures, transcending all riches found in earth.

Tresour of tresours, yif it be weel souht,
Is vertuous fredam with large liberte; 2592
With worldli goodis it may nat be bouht,
With roial rubies, gold, stonis nor perre;
For it transcendith and hath the souereynthe
Aboue al richessis that been in erthe founde, 2596
A man at large freeli to stonde vnbounde.

[How Philitee lost his kyngdom.] ¹

The third king, Philitee, lost his kyngdom and his life when attacked by Odoacer.

¶ Next thes too kynges, in ordre as ye may see,
To Iohn Bochas gan shewe his presence
The thridde kyng, callid Phelete, 2600
Which bi Fortunys sodeyn violence
Loste his kyngdam, and be cruel sentence
Of Odoacer, the tiraunt merciles,
Loste his liff and cam no mor in pres. 2604

The Emperor Marcian was murdered by his soldiers;

Thes sodeyn chaunges to reede whan I gan,
Sauh so ofte the wheel turne up & down
¶ Of Fortune; ther cam oon Marcian,
Of whom is maad non othir mencionn, 2608
Sauf be a sodeyn coniuraceoun
He moordred was, [he] beynng innocent,
Among his knihtis, which slouh hym of assent.

and young Leo, who justly succeeded his father of the same name,

¶ Than tofor Bochas to shewe[n] his presence 2612
Ther cam oon that callid was Leoun,
Which kauht a title be no violence,
But made his cleyrn be iust successioun
Afftir his fadir, and took pcessioun, 2616
Which of a Leoun, myn auctour seith the same,
Beynng emperour, bar the same name.

was tyrannously put out of his realm by Zeno and forced to become a monk.

This yonger Leoun, ageyn al trouthe & riht,
Be tiranyne, as maad is mencionn, 2620
Thoruh cruel Zeno, that was an hardi kniht,
Was put out of his pcessioun,
Constreyned to lyue in religioun;
But to what ordre that he did[e] weende, 2624
I fynde nat; but ther he made an eende.

2591. of] o H.

2600. Philite P.

2605. begane H.

2609. a] om. R.

2604. and] om. H.

2606. often H — vp so down H, J.

¹ MS. J. leaf 162 verso.

[How Symak and Boys his son in lawe were banys-
shed and aftir Iuged to die.]¹

- A**FFTIR thes myscheuys Symak gan [p. 396]
hym drawe
Toward Bochas *with* a ful pitous face;
Bois *cam with* hym, that was his sone in lawe, 2628
Which among Romeyns gretli stood *in* grace.
But in this mateer breefli for[th] to pace,
The said[e] Bois, only for his trouthe
Exilid was; alas, it was gret routhe! 2632
- For comoun proffit he was onto the toun
In mateeres that groundid wer on riht
Verray protectour and stedfast champioun
Ageyn too tirauntis, which of force & myht 2636
Hadde in the poraille oppressid many a wiht
Be exacciouns and pillages gunne of newe
Vpon the comouns, ful fals & riht vntrewe.
- Whan* Theodorik, of Gothes lord & kyng, 2640
Took upon hym be fals intrusioun
To regne in Roome, the peple oppressyng
Bi his too prouostis, as maad is menciou[n], —
Did in the cite gret oppressioun, 2644
Confederat as brothir onto brothir:
Coniugast, and Trigwill was the tothir.
- Compendiousli this mateer to declare,
To saue the comoun Bois stood *in* diffence; 2648
For lyff nor deth he list nat for to spare
To withstonde of tiraunt^s the sentence.
Kyng Theodorik of cruel violence
Banshed hym bi hatful tyrannye, 2652
He and his fadir tabide in Pauye.
- Aftirward Theodorik of hatreede,
Lik a fals tiraunt, of malis & envie
Yaf iugement that bothe too wer dede. 2656
Bot touchyng Boys, as bookis speciefie,
Wrot dyuers bookis of philosophie,
Of the Trynite mateeres þat wer dyuyne,
Martird for Crist & callid Seueryne. 2660

Symmachus
and his
son-in-law
Boetius were
great favour-
ites in Rome;
and Boetius
was exiled for
his upright-
ness.

He was
protector and
champion
of the city
against two
tyrants,

Conigastus
and Trigguilla,
provosts of
Theodorik;

but his
struggle
against
them brought
him into
disfavour
with
Theodorik,
who banished
him and his
father to
Pavia.

Afterwards
they were
both con-
demned to
death.

2626. Simachus P. 2628. Boetius P.
2639. riht] eke R. 2640. Whan] Than B.

¹ MS. J. leaf 162 verso.

[Off kyng Arthure and his conquestes / of the
commoditees of Englonde / and he was destroyed
by his Cosyn Mordrede.]¹

Was there ever
a prince who
could make
himself secure
in Fortune's
grace?

WAS ever prince [that] mihte hymself assure
Of Fortune the fauour to restreyne? —

Lik his desir hir grace to recure
Tabide stable & stonde[n] at certeyne? 2664

Among alle rekne Arthour of Breteyne,
Which in his tyme was holde of euery wiht
The wisest prince and the beste kniht.

Arthur of
Britain was in
his time held to
be the wisest
prince and best
knight; and
Bochas tells
his story in
this chapter.

To whom Bochas gan his stile dresse,
In this chapitle to remembre blyue 2668

His grete conquest & his hih noblesse,
With synguler deedis that he wrouhte his lyue.
And first he gynmeth breefli to descryue 2672

The siht of Breteyne & of that contre,
Which is enclosed with a large se,

Britain is sur-
rounded by a
large sea and
lies far to the
west, north of
Spain and near
France. It has
many rivers,
hot baths and
divers minerals,

Set ferr westward, as ye shal vndirstond,
Hauyng Spaigne* set in the opposit, 2676

Of a smal angle callid Ing[e]lond,
Fraunce aboute hym, descryuyng thus his siht, —
With many a ryueer plesaunt of deliht,
Hote bathes [&] wellis ther be founde, 2680
Dyuers myneres, of metallis ful habounde.

and is abund-
ant in food.
London has
ships, Win-
chester wine,
Worcester
fruits, Hertford
cattle, and the
Cotswolds wool.

Aboute which renneth the occian,
Riht plenteuous of al maner vitaille,
The name of which at Brutis first began. 2684

Londene hath shippis be the se to saille,
Bachus at Wynchestre gretli doth auaille,
Worcetre with frutis haboundeth at the fulle,
Herford with beestis, Cotiswold with wolle, 2688

There are hot
baths in Bath,
York has
timber, Corn-
wall mines,

Bathe hote bathes, holsum for medecyne,
York mihti tymber for gret auauntage,
Cornewaile myneres in to myne,

2671. deedis] *om.* H.

2475. westward] west H.

2676. Spaigne] in Spaigne B. S.

2680. &] *om.* H, R 3. 2684. at] & H.

2686. Wynchestre] Westmynstre H, Westmenstre R 3.

2691. Cornewale H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 163 recto.

- Salisburie beestis ful sauage,
Whete, melk & honi, plente for eueri age,
Kent and Cauntirburi hath gret commodite
Of sondri fishes ther taken in the se.
- 2692 Salisbury wild
cattle, Kent
and Canter-
bury have
plenty of fish.
- Bochas reherseth, ther is eek in Breteyne
Found of geet a ful precious stoon,
Blak of colour & vertuous in certeyne
For siknessis many mo than oon,
Poudir of which wil discure anon,
Yif it be dronke (thouh it be secre),
Of maydenhod the broke chastite.
- 2696 As Bochas
says, jet is
found in
Britain, and
its powder
when drunk
will quickly
discover
2700 broken
chastity.
- Ther been eke* perlis founde in muskel shells;
And thei [be] beste that haue most whitnesse.
And, as the book of Brutus also telles,
How kyng Arthour, to speke of worthynesse,
Passed al kynges in marcial prowesse;
Touchyng his lyne & his roial kynreede,
Who that list see, in Brutus he may reede.
- 2704 There are also
pearls, and
the whitest
are the best.
King Arthur
surpassed all
kings in
marcial
2708 prowess,
and his line
is described
in the Brut.
- His fadir callid Vter Pendragoun, [p. 397]
A manli kniht and famous of corage,
Of fals envie moordrid be poisoun;
His sone Arthour, but yong & tendre of age,
Be ful assent of al his baronage
Be successioun crownid anon riht,
Callid of Europe the moste famous kniht.
- 2712 His father
was Uther
Pendragon,
and after he
had been
murdered
by poison,
Arthur was
crowned king.
- 2716
- Curteis, large and manly of dispence,
Merour callid off liberalite,
Hardi, strong and of gret prouidence.
And of his knihtli magnanymyte
He droof Saxones* out of his contre,
Conquered bi prowesse of his myhti hond
Orcadois, Denmark and Houlond,
- 2720 Arthur was
courteous and
a mirror of
liberality,
hardy and of
great foresight.
He drove out
the Saxons
and conquered
the Orkneys,
Denmark and
Holland,
Ireland, Nor-
- Hirelond, Norway, Gaule, Scotlond & France.
As Martis sone to the werris meete,
Wrouht bi counsail, and bi the ordynaunce
Of prudent Merlyn, callid his prophete.
And, as I fynde, he leet make a seete,
- 2724 way, Gaul,
Scotland and
France, by
the counsel of
prudent
Merlin. He
founded the
order of the
2728 Round Table,

2693. whete melk] whetmele H.

2697. geet] gret R.

2703. eke] of B, R, J.

2717. dispence] expense R. 2721. Saxones] Saxoyns B.

2723. holonde H, Holande R 3. 2727. Merlyn] Marly H.

- Amon[g] his Bretouns most famous & notable,
 Thoruh al the world callid the Round[c] Table.
- and chose out
 the most
 famous knights
 and bound
 them by
 statute
- Most worthi knihtis, preeued of ther hond,
 Chose out be Arthour this ordre haue begunne; 2732
 Ther famous noblesse thoruh euery Cristen lond
 Shon be report as doth the mydday sonne;
 To Famys paleis the renoun is vp ronne,
 Statutis set be vertuous ordenaunce, 2736
 Vndir *proffessioun* of marcial *gouernaunce*.
- to be always
 armed, except
 when they
 slept, and to
 sustain rightful
 quarrels
- The firste statut in the[r] registre founde,
 Fro which thei sholde nat declyne of riht,
 Be ful assuraunce of oth and custum bounde, 2740
 Ay to be armyd in platis forgid briht,
 Except a space to reste* hem on the niht,
 Seeke auentures, & ther tyme spende
 Rihtful quarellis to susteene & diffende. 2744
- and help the
 weaker party
 if justice were
 on his side.
- The feebler parti, yif he hadde riht,
 To ther poweer manli to supporte,
 Yif that thei wern requered of any wiht
 Folk disconsolat to bern vp & conforte, 2748
 At alle tymes men may of hem* reporte,
 No maner wise thei do no violence
 And ageyn tirauntes make knihtli resistance,
- They were
 bound to com-
 fort the dis-
 consolate and
 to resist
 tyrants, so that
 widows and
 maidens were
 protected and
 children re-
 stored to their
 inheritance, and
 always ready to
 make them-
 selves strong in
 the defence of
 holy church
 and their
 country.
- That widwes, maidnes suffre no damage 2752
 Be fals oppressioun of hatful cruelte,
 Restoren childre to ther trewe heritage,
 Wrongli exiled folk to ther contre,
 And for hooli chirchis liberte 2756
 Reedi euere to make hemsilue strong,
 Rather to deie than suffre hem [to] haue wrong.
- For comoun proffit, as chose champions,
Pro republica defendyng ther contre, 2760
 Shewe ay themsilff[e] hardi as leouns,
 Honoure tenrece, chastise dishoneste,
 Releue al them that suffre aduersite,
 Religious folk, haue hem in reuerence, 2764
 Pilgrymes reseceyue that faille of *per* dispence.
- They performed
 the seven deeds
 of mercy in arms
- Callid in armys seuene deedis of mercy,
 Burie* soudiours that faile* sepulture,

2742. reste] resten B. 2744. quarell R.

2749. At alle tymes] hat al tyme H. 2755. to] for R.

2767. Burie] Buried B, J—faile] failed B, J.

- Folk in prisoun delyuere hem graciousli, 2768
 Swich as be poore, ther raunsoun to recure.
 Woundid peepel that languisshe & endure,
 Which *pro republica* manli spent her blood, —
 The statut bond to do suich folkis good. 2772
- To putte hemsilff neuer in auenture
 But for mateeres that wer iust & trewe,
 Afforn prouided that thei stood[e] sure, and never put
 The ground weel knowe, wer it of old or newe. 2776 themselves in
 And aftir that the mateer whan thei knewe, adventure
 To proceede knihtli & nat feyne, except for just
 As riht requereth*, ther quarelis to darreyne. causes.
- A clerk ther was to cronicle al ther deedis, 2780
 Bi pursyuauntis maad to hym report
 Of ther expleit and ther goode speedis,
 Rad & songe, to folk gaff gret confort. each took his
 Thes famous knihtis makyng ther resort 2784 seat according
 At hih[e] feestis, euerich took his seete to his rank.
 Lik ther estat, as was to them meete.
- Oon was voide* callid the se pereilous,
 As Sang Real doth pley[n]li determyne, 2788
 Noon to entre but the most vertuuous,
 Of God prouided to been a pure virgyne,
 Born bi* discent tacomplisshe & to fyne, One seat was
 He allone, as cheeff and souereyne, 2792 empty, called
 Al auentures of Walis & Breteyne. the See Per-
 ilous, and
 only the most
 vertuuous
 could place
 himself
 there.
- Among al kynges renommed & famous, [p. 398]
 As a briht sonne set amynd the sterris, Arthur was to
 So stood Arthour notable & glorious, 2796 other kings as
 Lik fresh[e] Phebus castyng his liht aferris. a bright sun
 In pes lik Argus; most marcial in þe werris; set amidst the
 As Ector hardi, lik Vlixes tretable, stars; he was
 Callid among Cristene, kyng most honourable. 2800 Argus, Hector,
 Ulysses in one.
- His roial court he did[e] so ordeyne,
 Thoruh ech contre so ferr sprad out þe liht, The light of
 Who that euer thidir cam to pleyne, his roial court
 spread abroad
 through other
 realms, and

2779. requered B, J — ther] þe H — quarell R.

2781. pusyuauntis R, pusivauntis H, purcevauntys J.

2784. Thes] þe H.

2786. estat] staat R.

2787. voide] wide B, wilde J.

2788. seyn Greall H, seyn Geral R 3, Seyn Greal P, Sank Riall J.

2791. bi] of B, J.

- there was
always a knight
ready at hand
to defend the
oppressed. Be wrong oppressid*, & requered of riht, 2804
In his diffence he sholde fynde a kniht
To hym assigned, fynalli tatende
Be marcial doom his quarel to diffende.
- The challenges
of strange
knights were
also accepted. Yif it fill soo that any straunge kniht 2808
Souht auentures, and thidir cam fro ferre
To doon armys, his request maad of riht,
His chalenge seyn, wer it of pes or werre,
Was accepted, to the court cam nerre, 2812
Lik as he cam with many or allone,
Thei wer delyuered; forsake was neuer one.
- and there was
a school of
marcial doctrine
for the young. Ther was the scoole of marcial doctrine 2816
For yonge knihtes to lernen al the guise,
In tendre age to haue* ful disciplyne
On hors or foote be notable excersise;
Thyng take in youthe doth help in many wise,
And Idilnesse in greene yeeris gonne 2820
Of al vertu clipseth the sheene* sonne.
- and all wronged
people, widows
and maidens of
any nation,
were received,
and a knight
assigned to
their defence. Widwes, maidnes, oppressid folk also, 2824
Of extort wronges wrouht be tyrannye,
In that court, what nacioun cam therto,
Resceyuid wer; ther list no man denie.
Of ther compleyntis fond reedy remedie,
Maad no delay, but foorth anon[c] riht 2828
Them to diffende asigned was a kniht.
- The knights
were also
bound to tell
truthfully to
the registrar
all that befell
during their
adventures; Eek bi ther ordre thei bounde wer of trouthe, 2832
Be assuraunce & be oth Isworn,
In ther emprises, and lette for no slouthe,
Pleynli to telle how thei haue hem born,
Ther auentures of thynges do beforne, 2832
Riht as it fill, spare in no maneere
To telle ech thyng onto ther registreer.
- and their
statements
were sworn. Thyng openli doon or thyng that was secre, 2836
Of auentures as betwixe tweyne,
Or any quarel take of volunte
Treuly reporte, and platli nat to feyne,
Them to be sworn, the statut did ordeyne, 2840
No[uh]t conselid of worshep nor of shame,
To be registred reporte the silue same.

2804. oppressid] repressid B. 2809. aventure H.
2817. haue] lerne B. 2821. sheene] cleer B, clere J, cleare P.
2825. wer ther] ther thei H. 2841. conselid] cownsailid H.

- And to conclude, the statutis han vs lered,
 Eueri quarel groundid on honeste, 2844 Every honest
 In that court what kniht was requerid, quarrel was
 In the diffence of trouthe and equite, defended to
 Falshod excludid and duplicite, the death.
- Shal ay be reedi to susteene that partie, 2848
 His lyff, his bodi to putte in iupartie.
- Thus in Breteyne shon the cleer[e] liht
 Of cheualrye and of hih prowesse, Thus the clear
 Which thoruh the world[e] shadde his bemys light of
 briht, 2852 chivalry shone
 in Britain;
- Welle of worshep, conduit of al noblesse,
 Imperial court al wrongis to redresse,*
 Hedspryng of honour, of largesse cheef cisterne,
 Merour of manhod, of noblesse the lanterne. 2856
- Yit was ther neuer seyn so briht a sonne,
 The someres day in the mydday speere
 So fress[h]li shyne, but sum skies donne
 Mihte percas courtyne his bemys cleere; 2860 but the sun is
 Oft it fallith, whan Fortune makth best cheere shadow;
 And falsli smylith in hir double weede, and Fortune
 Folk seyn expert, than is she most to dreede. often smiles
 most kindly
 when she is
 most to dread.
- Thus whan the name of this worthi kyng 2864 Thus, while
 Was ferthest sprad be report & memorye, Arthur was
 In eueri rewm his noblesse most shynyng, flowering
 Al his emprises concludyng with victorie, in his strength,
- This double goddesse envied at his glorie 2868
 And caste menys be sum maner treyne
 To clipse the liht of knihthod in Breteyne.
- Thus whil Arthour stood most honourable
 In his estat, flouryng in lusti age, 2872 the Romans
 Among his knihtis of the round[e] table, tribute, out-
 Hiest of princis on Fortunis stage, ragedously
 The Romeyns sente to hym for truage, claiming a title
 Gan make a cleym froward & outraious, 2876 from Julius
 Takyng ther title of Cesar Iulivs. Cæsar.
- The same tyme, this myhti kyng Arthour [p. 399]
 Conquered hadde Gaule & also Fraunce,

2852. the] al þe H — his beemys shad so briht H, R 3.
 2854. redresse] repress B, J. 2858. 2nd the] om. R.
 2861. best] om. R. 2863. she] om. H — to] om. H.
 2864. this] þat H. 2870. Eclipse H.
 2876. Gan] Gayn R. 2877. ther] þe H.

- This happened at a time after Arthur had been victorious in France. Outraied Frolle, and lik a conquerour 2880
 Brouhte Parys vnder obeissaunce,
 Took hem to grace, & with his ordenaunce
 Gat al Aungoie, Aungerys* & Gascoyne,
 Peitow, Nauerne, Berry & Burgoyne. 2884
- He conquered Paris, Gascony, the country of Poitiers and Touraine, and kept possession for nine years. Cessed nat, but ded his besi peyne,
 Most lik a kniht heeld forth his passage,
 Gat al the lond of Peiteres & Towreyne,
 Ther cites yolde, to hym thei did homage;
 To be rebell thei fond non auauntage,
 Soiourned in France, as seith the cronicleer,
 Heeld pocessioun the space of nyne year. 2888
- He held a feast in Paris, and divided the lands of France amone his princes and barons. Heeld a feeste ful solempne at Parys, — 2892
 Al the contres which he gat in Fraunce,
 Lik a prince ful prouident & wis,
 Which hadde of fredam most* roial suffisaunce,
 Of al his conquest the contres in substaunce, 2896
 For his princis and barouns so prouided,
 Lik ther desertis he hath hem deuided.
- To Kay he gave Anjou and Maine, to Bedevere Normandy, to Berel the Duchy of Burgundy. To his senescall that was callid Kay
 Aungoye* & Meyn he gaff al that partie; 2900
 To his botleer, was maad[e] no delay,
 Callid Bedewar, he gaf Normandie;
 To a baroun, nih cosyn of allie,
 A manli kniht which namyd was Berell, 2904
 Gaff the duchie of Burgoyne euerydeell.
- and reserving other lordships for himself, returned to Britain and convened a great parliament in Carleon. Thus he departid lordships of that lond,
 Wher he thouhte was most expedient;
 Summe he reserued in his owne hond, 2908
 Ageyn to Breteyne retournd of entent,
 Sent out writtes, heeld a gret parlement,
 Afftir which he made a feeste anon
 In the contre Icallid Gloumorgon, 2912
- Ten kings were there ready to obey Arthur, thirteen earls, many barons, At a gret cite namyd Carlioun,
 As [it] is remembrid be writyngis,
 Cam many prince and many fressh baroun,
 In noubre, I fynde, that ther wer ten kynges, 2916
 Reedi tobeie Arthour in alle thynges;

2883. Aungerys] Aungorys B. 2885. nat] om. R.
 2894. prouident] prudently H. 2895. most] ful B, J.
 2900. Aungoyne B, P.
 2902. Bedwar R, Bedwerē H.

- Present also, as it was weel seene,
 Ther wer of erlis reknid ful thretteene.
- Al the knihtes of the rounde table, 2920 and all the
 Feste of Pentecost, a feeste princepal, knights of the
 Many estatis famous & honourable Round Table.
- Of princis, barouns born of the blood roial
 Wer ther present*, and in especial 2924
 Al tho that wern be oth & promys bounde
 To brothirhede* of the table rounde.
- And it fill so, whil that kyng Arthour
 As appartened sat in his estat, 2928 Then came
 Ther cam tuelue sent down be gret labour twelve richly
 Of olde mene chose [out] of the Senat, Romans chosen clad old
 Sad of ther port, demvre & temporat, by the Senate to present the
 Richeli clad, of look and off visage, claims of Rome.
 Greihored [echon], sempte of riht gret age. 2932
- First cunnyngli, as thei thouht it due,
 Cause of ther comyng & pleykli what thei mente, —
 First of assent the kyng thei gan salue, 2936 They saluted
 Next aftir that thei tolde who them sente, the king and
 And ther lettres meekli thei presente, meekly pre-
 Concludyng thus, to speke in breef langage, sented their
 How the Romeyns axe of hym truage. 2940 credentials,
 ————— demanding
 ————— immediate pay-
 ————— ment of the
 ————— tribute,
- Custumyd of old sith go many [a] day,
 Whan that Cesar conquered first Breteyne,
 The kyng requeryng to make hem no delay. 2944 which they
 Arthour abood, list nothyng to seyne; said dated
 But al the court gan at hem disdeyne; back to the
 The proude Bretouns of cruel hasti blood time of
 Wolde hem haue slay[e]n euene ther thei stood. Cesar's con-
 ————— quest. Arthour
 ————— was silent, but
 ————— his court would
 ————— have slain the
 ————— Roman envoys.
- “Nay,” quod Arthour to al his officeeres, 2948 “Nay,” said
 “Witbynne our court thei shal haue no damage; Arthour, “they
 Thei entred been and kome as massageris, shall have no
 And men also gretli falle in age. damage in our
 Let make hem cheer[e] with a glad visage.” 2952 court.”
- Took his counsail of suich as wer most wise,
 With this ansuere seid in curteis wise:

2924. ther present] present ther B.

2926. brothirhede] brothreed B. 2927. whil that] þat while H.

2930. of] om. R. 2931. temperate H.

2933. echon] om. J — gret] om. R.

2935. what] þat H. 2946. hasty cruel H.

2948. his] these R. 2954. this] his R.

His answer was, "You threaten me with war,
 "Your lettres rad and pleynli vndirstonde,
 The teneur hool rehersid in this place, 2956
 Touching the charge which ye haue tak on honde,
 To yiue ansuere rehersid in short space,
 Be woord & writyng ye gretli me manace,
 How ye purpose with many strong bataille 2960
 Passe the mounteyns me felli for tassaille.

but you need not trouble to come the entire way; I will shorten your journey, with God's grace."
 It nedeth nat suich conquest to a-legge [p. 400]
 Ageyn[es] Bretouns of non old truage,
 Of comyng down your weie I shal abregge, 2964
 With Goddis grace shorte your passage.
 Mak no delay, but with my barounage
 Passe the se withoute long tarieng
 To meete Romeyns at ther doun komyng." 2968

At their departure they were given rich gifts, and, returning to Rome, reported Arthur's bounteous liberality.
 This was the ansuere youe to the massagers.
 At ther departy[n]g bar with hem gret richesse,
 The kyng bad so vnto his officceres.
 Ageyn to Roome in haste thei gan hem dresse, 2972
 Pleynli reportyng the bounteuous* largesse
 Of worthi Arthour, considred all[e] thynges,
 Of Cristendom he passed all othir kynges.

They told Lucius that he excelled all others in chivalry, and that his knights were the best in Europe;
 Arthuris court was the souers and well 2976
 Of marcial power*, to Lucyvs thei tolde,
 And how that he all othir did excell
 In chualrie, with whom ther wer withholde
 The chose knihtis, bothe yong & olde, 2980
 In al Europe, who can conside ariht,
 Of al noblesse the torchis be ther liht.

they said further, that he would pay no tribute, for he held no land of the Romans.
 He cast hym nat to paien no truage,
 Seide of the Romeyns [how] he heeld no lond, 2984
 Which to* diffende he wil make his passage,
 "Of your cleymys to breke atoo the bond;"
 And knihtli preeue [it] with his [owne] hond,
 "Ye haue no title, ye nor your cite, 2988
 Ageyn the Bretouns, which euer haue stonde free."

2956. tenour R, H.
 2972. thai gan in hast H.
 2973. the] om. H — bounteuous] plenteuous B, J.
 2975. othir] om. H.
 2977. power] prowess B, J, P.
 2984. how] om. R. 2985. to] for to B, R, J.
 2987. it and owne are supplied from MS. Harley 1766, om. in B, R, J, P, H 5, H, R 3.
 2989. haue] hath R.

- With al the kyngdames soget to Rome toun,
 Kynges, princis aboff the hih mounteyns,
 With Lucyus thei be descendid doun 2992
 To meete Bretouns upon the large pleyns.
 Arthour[i]s comyng gretli he disdeyns,
 Because he hadde, pleynli to descryue,
 In multitude of peeple swich[e] fyue. 2996
- At Southhamptoun Arthour took the se
 With al his knihtis of the Rounde Table,
 Behynde he leffte to gouerne the contre
 His cosyn Modred, vntrusti & vnstable, 3000
 And, at a preef, fals & deceyuable,
 To whom Arthour of trust took al the lond,
 The crowne except, which he kept in his hond.
- Fro Southhamptoun Arthour gan to saile 3004
 With al the worthi lordis of Breteyne,
 At Barbeflu fond good arryuaile;
 He and his princis ther passage did ordeyne
 Thoruh Normandie, France & eek Burgeyne 3008
 Vp to a cite callid Augustence,
 Wher he first fond of Lucyus the *presence*.
- So large a feeld nor suich a multitude
 Of men of armys assemblid on a pleyne 3012
 Vpon a day, shortli to conclude,
 Togidre assemblid afforn wer* neuer seyn.
 Lucivs hadde on his partie certeyn
 Estward the world[e] al the cheualrie 3016
 Brouht be the mounteyns doun toward Germanye.
- Ther wardis sett, in ech a gret bataile,
 With ther capteyns to gouerne hem & guye,
 Arture with Bretouns the Romeins gan* assaile, 3020
 Fond many Sarsyns vpon that partie.
 The Bretoun Gaufride doth pleynli specefie,
 As he of Arthure þe prowess doth descryue,
 He slouh that day of Sarsyns kynges fyue. 3024

The Romans came down with Lucius to meet the Britons on the plains; and Lucius, who had five times the number of Arthur's men, was contemptuous.

Arthur took ship at Southampton, and left his traitorous cousin Mordred as regent.

He landed at Harfleur and marched to meet Lucius and found him at Augusta.

Never before was such a large army seen as that of the Romans.

There were many Saracens with the Romans, and Geoffrey says that Arthur slew five of their kings;

3000. Modred] moordred R.

3003. kept] toke H.

3005. worthi lordis of] lordis of worthi H.

3006. Barbeflu] Barflue J, Harflue P.

3011. suich] so gret R. 3013. day] playn H.

3014. wer] was B, J. 3017. the] om. R.

3019. hem] om. H.

3020. gan] did B, J.

- and the slaughter was so great that it were tedious to describe it. The grete slaughtre, theffusioun of blood
That was that day vpon outhr side,
Ech ageyn othir so furious was & wood,
Lik for the feeld as Fortune list prouide, 3028
That yiff I sholde theron longe abide
To write the deth, the slaughtre & the maneere,
Touchyng the feeld wer tedious for to heere.
- To conclude, Lucius was slain and the proud Romans were put to flight; To conclude & leue the surplusage, 3032
In that bataile ded was many a kniht,
The consul Lucyus slay[e]n in that rage,
The proude Romeyns be force put to fliht.
Of gentillesse Arthour anon riht 3036
Leet the bodi of Lucyus be caried
Ageyn to Roome; it was no lenger taried.
- and, like a king, Arthur saw that his dead princes and lords and knights were buried. The worthi princis and lordes that wer dede,
And manli knihtis abidyng with Arthour, 3040
Lik a kyng solempneli took heed
That thei wer buried be dilligent labour.
And in this while, lik a fals tretour,
His cosyn Modred did his besi peyne 3044
To take fro hym the kyngdam of Breteyne.
- and persuaded the people to rebel against Arthur, So as the stori pleynli maketh mynde, [p. 401]
Modred falsli, to his auuantage,
Entreted hem that wer lefft behynde, 3048
Vnder colour of fraudulent langage,
Gaff hem* gret fredam; & þei did hym homage,
That be his fals[e] conspiracioun
Brouht al Breteyne into rebelloun. 3052
- making fair promises and granting great freedoms. Be faire behestis & many freendli signe
Drouh the people to hym in sondri wise,
Shewed hym outward goodli & benigne,
Gaf libertes & graunted gret fraunchise 3056
To make Bretouns ther souereyn lord despise.
And purueyaunce he gan ordeyne* blyue
To keepe the portes, he shold[e] nat aryue.
- But when Arthur heard of this false treason he Whan kyng Arthour hadde knouleching 3060
Of this fals tresoun and al the purueiaunce
That Modred made, he, lik a manli kyng,

3026. That] ther H. 3034. rage] orage (*perhaps; the o is mutilated and may stand for another incomplete letter*) H.

3040. And] a H — knyht H.

3050. hem] hym B. 3055. hym] om. R.

3058. ordeyne] make B, J. 3061. this] his R.

- Lefte Burgoyne & al the lond of France,
 Cast on Modred for to do vengauⁿce; 3064 sailed home
 Took the se, [&] with gret apparaile and landed at
 Cast at Sandwich to make his arrivaile. Sandwich,
- Modred was reedi *with* knihtis a gret noumbre,
 Made a strong feeld to meete hym on the pleyⁿ, 3068 where he met
 In purpos fulli Arthour to encoumbre, There Gawaln
 At which aryuaile slay[e]n was Gawayn, and Anguisel,
 Cosyn to Arthour, a noble kniht certayn; king of the
 Eek Aungisel was slay[e]n on the stronde, 3072 Scots, were
 Kyng of Scottes, or he myhte* londe. slain.
- Maugre Modred Arthour did aryue,
 The ground recurid lik a manli kniht
 (For feer of whom, anon aftir blyue 3076
 The seid[e] Modred took hym to the fliht), Arthur landed
 Toward Londene took his weie riht, in spite of
 The gatis shet, & kept was the cite Mordred, and
 Ageyn Modred; he myhte haue non entre. 3080 after defeating
 him went to
 London and
 shut the gates.
- In al haste to Cornewaile he fledde,
 The suerd of Arthure he durste nat abide,
 List he shold[e] leyn his lyff to wedde; 3084 Mordred fled to
 Yit for hymself[e] thus he gan prouide, Cornwall and
 With multitude gadrid on his side collecting a
 Put lyf and deth that day in auenture, fresh army
 That day to deie or the feeld recure. fought Arthur
 once more.
- In Fortune ther may be no certayn, 3088 In this fight
 Vpon whos wheel al brotilnesse is foundid: Mordred was
 Moodred that day in the feeld was slayⁿ slain and
 And noble Arthour to the deth was woundid. Arthur mort-
 Be which the feeld of Bretouns was confoundid, 3092 ally wounded.
- Of so gret slauhtre & goode knihtis lorn
 Vpon oo* day, men haue nat herde* toforn.
- Aftir the bataile Arthour for a while
 To stauche his woundis & hurtis to recure, 3096 After the battle
 Bor[n] in a liteer cam into an Ile Arthur was
 Callid Aualoun; and ther of auenture, borne to an
 As seid Gaufrid recordeth be scripture, isle called
 How kyng Arthour, flour of cheualrie, Avalon, where,
 Rit with his knihtis & lyueth in Fairye. 3100 as Geoffrey
 records, he still
 rides out with
 his knights and
 lives in Fairy-
 land.

3067. a] & R. 3070. rivaile H. 3073. myhte] cam to B.
 3081. Cornwall H. 3087. feeld] feel R.
 3094. oo] a B — herde] seyn B, seen J. 3098. Aualon P.

- Thus the sun
of Britain was
translated to
the sky, where
he sits crowned
in the heavenly
mansion, the
first of the
nine worthies.
- Thus of Breteyne translaid was þe sunne
Vp to the riche sterri briht dongoun, —
Astronomeeres weel reherse kunne, — 3104
Callid Arthuris constellacioun,
Wher he sit crownid in the heuen[y] mansioun
Amyd the palcis of stonis cristallyne,
Told among Cristen first of þe worthi nyne. 3108
- Britons still
believe old
Merlin's prop-
hec that
Arthur shall
come again
some day to
reign in Eng-
land.
- This error yit abit among Bretouns,*
Which foundid is vpon the prophecie
Of olde Merlyn, lik ther oppynyouns:
He as a kyng is crownid in Fairie, 3112
With sceptre and suerd, & with his regalie
Shal resorte as lord and souereyne
Out of Fairye & regne in Breteyne,
- At any
rate his epitaph
says, "Here lies
King Arthur,
who shall reign
again."
- And repaire ageyn the Rounde Table; 3116
Be prophecie Merlyn set the date,
Among[es] princis kyng incomparable,
His seete ageyn to Carlioun translate.* 3120
The Parchas sustren sponne so his fate;
His epitaphie recordeth so certeyn:
Heer lith kyng Arthour, which shal regne ageyn.
- Now I will re-
turn to Bochas,
but first I'll
write a lenvoye
on Mordred's
treason.
- Vnto Bochas I wil ageyn retourne,
Afforn rehersed parcel of his prowesse, 3124
Theron tabide me list no mor soiourne,
But to remembre the gret vnkynd[e]nesse,
The conspiracioun, þe tresoun, the falsnesse
Doon to kyng Arthour be his cosyn Modrede, 3128
Make a Lenvoye, that al men may it reede.

[Lenvoy.]

- This tragedie of
Arthur bids
princes to be-
ware of treason.
Nothing is
more perilous.
- THIS tragedie of Arthour heer folwyng [p.402]
Bit princis all bewar of fals tresoun;
For in al erthe is non mor pereilous thing 3132
Than trust of feith, wher is decepcioun
Hid vndir courtyn of fals collusioun.
For which men sholde — I holde þe counsail good —
Bewar afforn euere of vnkynde blood. 3136

3103. briht] om. H. 3107. the] that R.

3109. Bretouns] Breteyns B.

3118. princis kyng] kyngis prince H, R 3.

3119. translate] to translate B, J. 3120. sponne] span H.

3127. 3rd the] & H, R 3. 3129. it] om. R.

3133. Than] That H — of] on H. 3135. men] none R.

The world [is] dyuers, Fortune ay chaungyng,
 In euery contre & eueri regioun;
 At a streiht neede fewe freendis abidyng;
 Long absence causeth deuisioun:*
 And yif princis be fals ambicioun,*
 Nih of allie, shewe too facis in oon hood,
 Lat men bewar euere of vnkynde blood.

3140 The world is
 always chang-
 ing. At a
 need we have
 few stead-
 fast friends.
 Men must al-
 ways beware
 of unkind rela-
 tions.

Who was mor hardi of princis heer regnyng
 Or mor famous of marcial renoun
 Than whilom was, his enmyes outraieng,
 Arthur, cheef sonne of Brutis Albioun?
 But, for al that, the disposicioun
 Of Fate and Fortune, most furious & wood,
 Caused his destruccioun be vnkynde blood.

3144 Who was more
 hardy and
 famous than
 Arthur? Yet
 he was de-
 stroyed by
 unkind blood!

What mor contrarious to nature in shewing
 Than fair pretence, double of entencioun,
 Gret alliaunces frowardli werkyng?
 Hid vndir flours, a serpent cast poison,
 Briht siluir scaled, damageth the dragoun;
 Ech werm sum parti tarageth of his brood.
 And what mor pereilous than vnkynde blood?

3152 What is more
 evil than fair
 pretense, like
 a silver-scaled
 serpent hidden
 under flowers?
 What more
 perilous than
 unkind blood?

Noble Princis, on Arthour remembryng,
 Deemeth the day of Phebus goyng down:
 Al is nat gold that is cleer shynyng,
 Afforn prouided in your inward resoun,
 Fals vndirmynyng & supplantacioun,
 Remembryng ay with Arthour how it stood,
 Be conspiracioun of vnkynde blood.

3160 Noble Princes,
 remember the
 story of Arthur,
 and do not
 deem the day
 fair until the
 sun has set.

¶ An exclamacion a-geyn men þat been vnkynde
 to þeir kynrede.¹

AGEYN* kynreedis & vnkynde alliaunces,
 Bochas makth heer an exclamacioun
 Vpon Modred, which with his ordenaunces
 Caused of Arthour fynal destruccioun,
 The sunne eclipsyng of Brutis* Albioun,

3168 Bochas here
 exclaims upon
 Mordred, who
 caused the
 destruction of
 Arthur, not-
 withstanding
 that he trusted
 him above all
 men.

3137. The] This R. 3138. contre] court R.
 3139. abidyng] fyndyng H. 3140. deuisioun] discencioun B, R, J.
 3141. ambicioun] deuisioun R, B, J, derision R 3.
 3146. Than þat H. 3156. brood] bloode H, R 3.
 3165. Ageyn] Yeyn B. 3169. Brutis] Brutus B, J, P.

¶ ¹ The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 165 verso: "An exclamacioun of Bochas ageyn kynredys vnkynde."

- Natwithstondyng, pleynli to descryue,
He trusted hym abof al men on lyue.
- It is strange and hateful to God for any man to be unkind to his kindred. It is a merucile & vnkouth to deuise, 3172
Be what occasioun or be what corage,
That a man sholde in any maner wise
Be founde vnkynde vnto his lynage.
Hatful to God, that in any age 3176
Blood ageyn blood born of o kynreede
Conspire sholde of malis or hatreede.
- It were vain to tarry on this matter. The story of Arthur and Mordred is well known. In this mateer it wer but veyn to tarie,
The stori knowe of Arthour & Modrede, 3180
Be blood allied, in werkyng most contrarie,
Which made many Bretoun kniht to bleede;
For be vsurping, conspiryng and falsheede
Of seide Modred, most infortunat, 3184
Caused al Breteyne to stond[e] desolat.
- All Britain stood desolate without her king; and the light of the Round Table was darkened and eclipsed by Mordred, the forsworn knight. First desolat be absence of ther kyng,
Callid in his tyme of kynges most notable,
The desolacioun of knihtis abidyng, 3188
Whilom in Breteyne famous & honourable,
Brethre echon of the Rounde Table,
The which be Moodred, the false forswor kniht,
Stod longe eclipsed & dirked of his lyht. 3192
- The monarchy was divided, that once stood whole, and all concluded in duplicity. The liht of noblesse þat shon thoruh al Breteyne
Be fals Modred was dirkid off his bemys;
The monarchie departid was on tweyne,
That stood first oon with his marcial stremys. 3196
But aftirward the brihtnesse of his lemys
Drouh to declyn be fals deuisioun,
Which hath destroyed ful many a regioun.
- Adieu welfare and prosperity where there is no concord. Trees cannot thrive when separated from their bark. Al this processe vpon* duplicite 3200
Pleynli concludeth, & blood that is* vnkynde.
A-dieu weelfare and al prosperite,
Wher* pes & concord been llefft behynde:
Trees may nat thryue departid fro þe rynde, — 3204

3171. on] of R — on lyue] alive H. 3172. a] om. R.
3173. occasioun] comparisoun H. 3175. vnto] to R.
3185. to] om. H. 3187. his] this R. 3190. Brethren R.
3191. 1st The] om. H, R 3 — forsworn R, J.
3198. declyn] dirknesse R. 3200. vpon] vpon a B, R, J, H 5.
3201. blood that is] that is blood B, J, H 5, that is blode is R,
on bloode þat is H.
3203. Wher] Ther B, J.

A pleyn exauple in Arthure & Modrede,
Who can conceyue, & list ther stori reede.

[Off Gesevye kyng of venandre and of iij. othre
kynges / and how they were destroyed.]¹

AFFTIR al these vnkouth straunge* thingis, [p.403] Among five
Tofor Iohn Bochas, as made is mencionn, 3208 mighty kings,
Ther cam toforn hym fyue myhti kinges Gelmur, king
For to compleyne ther desolacioun. of the Vandals,
First Giseli[n]e, kyng off the regioun came first to
Callid Venandre, in werris ful contraire 3212 complain his
Vnto a prince callid Balisaire. desolation.

And to this saide noble Balisaire, Together with
Ful rennomed that tyme in cheualrie, the king of the
The kyng of Gothes was also aduersaire; 3216 Goths he was
And bothe attonis of hatrede & envie an enemy of
Assentid fulli to hoolde chaumpartie Belisarius,
Geyn Balisair, which thoruh his hih renoun who took them
Took hem bothe and cast hem in prisoun. 3220 both captive
and put them
in prison.

Ther is no mor of them in Bochas founde. Then came
But aftir them, in ordre be writyng, Amarales, king
¶ Cam Amarales, with many bloody wounde, of the Moors,
Which in his tyme was of Maures kyng. who fought
3224 John the
Sanguinary
without cause

Withoute cause or title of any thyng
Vpon Ian Sangwyn gan werreye ageyn riht,
Which thoruh al Affrik was oon the best[e] kniht.

The saide Ian, armyd in plate and maile, 3228 and was slain;
Mette Amarales in Affrik on a sond, and that is all
I can find
remembered
about him.

And heeld with hym a myhti strong bataile,
And lik a kniht slouh hym with his hond,
Droof al his people proudli fro þat lond. 3232
And in my book ther is non othir mynde
To be remembrid of hym that I can fynde.

¶ Than Syndual, of Brentois lord & kyng,
Tofor Bochas put hymself in pres, 3236
Gan shewe his myscheef, pitousli pleynyng,
Then Sindbal
the Herulian
began to
describ his
misfortune,

3207. straunge vnkouth B. 3211. Gelymer P.
3212. Vandalia P. 3214. And to this saide noble] Vn to this
noble saide H. 3219. Geyn] gey H.
3223. Amarales] Attila P. 3226. Ian] Iohn H, P.
3228. The] This H. 3229. Amarales] Attila P.
3232. his] that R. — þat] þe H. 3235. Brentois] Bretonys
R, Bretoun J, Briteyns H, Brentoys R 3, Brentois P.

¹ MS. J. leaf 165 verso.

- for he made war
on Narses, a
Roman knight.
- Whan he heeld werre, wilful & rek[c]les,
Ageyn a prince callid Narsates,
A Romeyn kniht, fers, hardi & riht strong 3240
In his diffence whan men wold doon hym wrong.
- who was an
eunuch,
and captured
Sindbal and
hanged him.
- This Narsates, of cas or auenture,
Thouh he in deede was a manli kniht,
He failed membres in soth of engendrure. 3244
His aduersaires he put echon to fliht,
Took ther kyng, & foortwith anon riht,
As the cronicle pleyuli doth recorde,
On hih[e] galwes he heng hym with a corde. 3248
- Soon afterward
king Totila the
Ostrogoth met
Narses with a
great army,
and he too
was defeated
and slain.
- Of Narsetis aftir this victorie,
¶ Kyng Totila hadde ful gret disdeyn;
With a gret host, most pompous in his glorie,
Kam upon hym & mette hym on a pleyyn. 3252
With multitude thow he wer ouerleyn,
Kyng Totila, which many man beheeld,
Of Narsates was slay[e]n in the feeld.

[Trusimond kyng of Gepidois.]¹

- Turisund, king of the Gepidae,
requested
Bochas to write
his adversity
and the un-
happy fate of
his daughter
Rosamond, to
whom Fortune
was contrary
all her life.
- IN ordre nexte Bochas doth [so] write, 3256
Of Gepidois how king Trusimonde
Requered hym that he wolde endite
The grete aduersites in which he did habounde,
And of his douhtir callid Rosymonde 3260
The vnhappi chaunce to marken & descryue,
To whom Fortune was contrarye al hir lyue.
- Alboin, king of
Lombardy, slew
Turisund in
battle and
afterwards
married Rosa-
mond.
- Alboinvs kyng of Lumbardie,
Which many lond heeld in subieccioun, 3264
Conquered Beeme, Pragve & Hungrie,
The lond of Gepidois, with many regioun,
Fauht with ther kyng, as maad is mencion,
Slouh in bataille the said[e] Trusimonde, 3268
Weddid aftir his douhtir Rosamonde.

3238. reklesses R.

3239. ycalled Narses P — Narsates] Narsarses H.

3242. Narses P, Narsates H.

3249. Narsates H, R, J, Narsetes R 3, Narses P.

3252. on] in H, R. 3256. so] om. R, J, H 5.

3257. Trusimonde] Eurismonde H, Ewrysmonde R 3, Trus-
monde J, Turisounde P.

3263. Albonius or Alboinus B. 3266. regioun] dongoun H.

3268. Eurismonde H, R 3, Trusmond J, Turisounde P.

¹ MS. J. leaf 165 verso, in margin.

Myn auctour gretli comendeth hir beute
 And writ also she was but yong of age,
 Whos stori first, whan I dide see 3272
 How vngracious was also hir mariage,
 I gan wexe pale in my visage,
 Gretli astoned, confus of verray shame
 To write this stori in hyndryng of hir name. 3276

I wil forbern and breefli passen heere,
 The surplusage lihtli ouerpasse;
 For bi and bi to telle al the maneere
 Of felonies that did hir herte enbrace, 3280
 It sholde blotte this book & eek difface.
 For which I caste treuli & nat faille
 Touching hir stori to make rehersaille.

(And when I first read her story and knew how ungracious her marriage was, I grew pale and confused at the thought of writing in detraction of her name.

So I will forbear and pass over the rest lightly: for it would blot this book to tell the manner of all her sins.)

[How Albonyus was moordred by his wif / and how she aftir most vicious was moordred also.]¹

KYNG Alboinus, as ye shal vndirstonde, 3284
 Aftir many conquest & victorie,
 Which he hadde [had] both on se & londe,
 To putte his name* & triumphes in memorie,
 Leet crie a feeste to his ences of glorie; 3288
 At which[e] feeste, solempne & princepall,
 So as he sat in his estat roiall,
 Parcel for pride, parcel for gladnesse, [p. 404]
 The queen present, the said[e] Rosamounde, 3292
 Take and supprised he was *witb* dronk[e]nesse,
 Of myhti wynes which þat day did habounde,
 Sent a goblet of gold, as it is founde, 3296
 Vnto the queen, with licour ful plesaunt,
 Bad to hir fadir [she] sholde drynke a taunt.
 She dempte it was a maner moquerie,
 First hir name and worshep to confounde,
 To bidde hir drynke a taunt for hir partie 3300
 To hir fadir, the said[e] Trusymounde,
 Slay[e]n afforn with many bloodi wounde

After his victories King Alboin let cry a feast to put his triumph in memory,

and as he sat in his royal estate

he became drunk, and bade Queen Rosamond drink a taunt to her father.

She looked upon it as an insult to drink to her father, whom Alboin had slain, and determined to be revenged.

3276. this] his R — hir] his H.

3284. Albynus H, R 3, Albonyus R, Albonius or Alboinus B.

3287. names B. 3288. of] and R.

3294. which þat day] þat day which H, R 3.

3301. Eurismounde H, Ewrismounde R 3, Trusmond J, Turisounde P.

3302. bloodi] mortall H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 166 recto.

- Be Albonius, thoruh his vnhappi chaunce, —
Of which rebuk she cast to do vengauce. 3304
- She waited a long time, and at last persuaded a squire named Peredeo to murder her lord,
She bar the rancour ful long in hir entent,
Which day be day gan renewe & encrece.
A certeyn squieer she made of hir assent,
Which tacomplisshe she wolde neuer cese. 3308
And on another squieer she gan prese,
Callid Peredeus, accorded al in oon,
This false moordre texecute anon.
- which he did, although Alboin defended himself to the last with a broken spear.
The day was set; whil he lay & sleepe 3312
Fill upon hym *witb* sharp suerdis gronde:
Hir lord was slayn, alas, he took no* keepe!
Or he deide of Fortune he hath founde
A speris hed[e] to a tronchoun bounde, 3316
Hymself defendyng in that mortal striff;
But slayn he was be tresoun of his wiff.
- After the murder Rosamond took all Alboin's treasure and fled with Hilmichis, her squire, to Ravenna.
¶ Aftir this moordre tescape fro daungeer,
This Rosamounde fledde awei be niht. 3320
Witb hir went[e] Melchis hir squieer;
Took a ship, sailed be sterre-liht,
To Rauenne thei took the weie riht,
Lad with hem for refut & socour 3324
Of kyng Alboyne al the hool tresour.
- She then married Hilmichis, but growing tired of him, — for her affections were promiscuous, —
Aftir she was [I]weddid to Melchis,
Man of this world[e] stood most in hir grace.
Hir loue appallid, set of him no pris; 3328
For she nat koude be content in o place.
Hir ioie was euere newe thing to purchase,
Tassaie manye, plesid neuer *witb* oon,
Til bexperience she preuid hadde echon. 3332
- had an affair with the Provost of Ravenna. Hilmichis she sought to murder.
Prouost of Rauenne & chief *gouernour*,
For the excellence of hir gret beute
About al women loued hir paramour,
Whan she entred first in that cite. 3336
And thoruh hir fraude and duplicite

3303. Albonoys R.

3304. to] *om.* H.

3312. whil] whan H.

3314. he] or he H — no] *om.* H, non B, R.

3321. Melchis] Helmiges P — hir] his H.

3325. kyng Alboyne] Alboynus J, Alboinus P.

3326. wedded to Helmiges P. 3329. o] no H.

3331. manye] *om.* H — neuer *witb*] *witb* nevir H.

- She caste moordre in hir froward ays
 Hir newe husbonde that callid was Melchis.
- The hote somer in lusti fressh[e] May, 3340 One hot day
 The same Melchis for heete & weerynesse when he was
 Hymself to bathe wente a certeyn day, thirsty after
 Kauht a gret thrust of* feyntise in sothnesse. bathing, she
 And Rosamounde, of infernal falsnesse, 3344 gave him a
 Took a goblet, with licour gret foisoun, goblet of
 Gaf hym drynke wyn medlid with poison. poisoned wine.
- He drank up half, & therwithal he gan
 Brest and beli to suelle & arise, 3348 After he had
 Intoxicat, wex dedli pale & wan; his body began
 And whan he dide hir tresoun aduertise, to swell and
 He made hir drynke in the same wise, he grew deadly
 Maugre hir wil, she myht it nat restreyne, — 3352 pale, and,
 Guerdoun for moordre, — thei deide bothe tweyne. suspecting
 treason, com-
 pelled her to
 drink the rest.
 They both died.
- In this chapitle but litil frut I fynde,
 Sauf onli this, to putte in remembraunce,
 That men sholde calle ageyn to mynde, 3356 I find little
 Moordre affor God requereth ay vengauce. profit in this
 This funeral stori weied in ballaunce, chapter, except
 Wrouht be Melchis, compassid first & founde that it reminds
 Be fals tresoun of cursid Rosamounde. 3360 us that murder
 always cries
 vengeance
 before God.
- Slouh first hir lord Alboniv, as I seide,
 Tueyne of hir squieres did excusioun,
 Out of his slepe whan he did abraide.
 Lat countirpeise what was ther guerdoun: 3364 Rosamond slew
 Ech moordrid othir be drynkyng of poison; Alboin, and
 Melchis drank first, & next drank Rosamounde; afterwards she
 At them it gan; to them it did rebounde. and Hilmichis
 killed one
 another.
- Countirpeised o moordre for another: 3368 Both lost their
 Alboniv slayn be Rosamounde his wiff lives; treason
 Bassent of Melchis, & aftir ech to other punished by
 The poison partid; ther gan a fatal striff. treason; murder for
 Moordre quit for moordre, thei bothe lost her lyff. 3372 murder.
 Who vseth falsnesse, ful weel afferme I dar,
 Shal with falsnesse be quit or he be war.

3339. newe is repeated in H. 3341. Helmiges P

3343. of] on B.

3352. it] hir R. 3359. Helmiges P.

3361, 69. Alboinus P. 3364. ther] hir H.

3366. 2nd drank] om. H.

As men give,
so shall they
receive; and as
they deserve,
such shall be
their reward.

As thei departed, suich part ageyn þei took; [p. 405]

As men disserue, suich shal be ther meede. 3376

This froward story, eende of the Eihthe Book,

Of Rosamounde & Melchis wrought in deede,

For short conclusioun biddith men take heede,

Thei shal resceyue ageynward * suich mesour

As thei mesure vnto ther neih[e]bour. 3381

3378. Helmiges P.

3380. resceyue ageynward] ageynward resceyue B, P.

¶ **Finis libri octaui.**

¶ **Incipit IXus liber Bochasii.**

BOOK IX.

[How the Emperoure Maurycyus his wif and his
childre wer slayne atte Calcedonye.]¹

TO Franceis Petrak as Bochas vndertook, [p.407] As Bochas had
In eschewing of slouthe & idilnesse, promised
As he began taccomplissh* up his book, Francis Pe-
Assuraunce maad to doon his besynesse; 4 trarch to do
Which thing remembrid gan his penne dresse,* his best, he
The Nyhnte Book, so God wold send hym grace, now made
It to parfourme yif he had lyff & space. ready his pen
to finish his
Nynth Book.

At the gynnyng sothli of his labour, 8 And as he
In his studie to hym ther did appeere began, the
Mauricivs, the mihti emperour, mighty Em-
Which gan compleyne, rehersing the maneere peror Maurice
How he bi Phocas, cruel of look & cheere, came, com-
Destroied was — wiff, childre & kynreede — 12 plaining how
The slauhtre kouth, who list ther stori reede. he and his
family had
been murdered
by Phocas

The said[e] Maurice, as writ Bochas Iohn, in Chalcedon.
Was be Phocas brouht to destruccioun, 16

His wiff, his childre slay[e]n euerichon
At Calcedoyne, as maad is menciou[n],
Aftir whos deth he took pcessioun.
The said[e] Phocas, as put is in memorie, — 20 The same
Gaf Panteoun onto Seynt Gregorie, Phocas gave
Saint Gregory
the Pantheon,

Which was a temple of old fundacioun,
Ful of idoles upset on hih[e] stages. an old temple
full of the
idols of all
nations.

Ther thoruh the world of eueri nacioun 24
Wer of ther goddis set up gret images,
To eueri kyngdam direct wer ther visages,
As poetis & Fulgence be his lyue
In bookis olde pley[n]li doth descryue. 28

Eueri image hadde in his hand a belle,
As appartened to euery nacioun,
Which be crafft sum tokne sholde telle Each image
had a bell in
its hand, that
rang when the

3. taccomplissh] accomplished B, R.

5. is misplaced at end of stanza B.

18. Calcedoyne] Macedoyn H, R 3. 21. Pantheon P.

29. his] om. H. 30. appartened] appertenyth H, pertey-
neth J, P — nacioun] Regioun H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 166 verso.

kingdom to which it belonged fell in revolt against Rome.

Whan any kyngdam fill in rebelloun 32
Or gan maligne ageyn[es] Roome toun;
Swich to redresse with strong & mihti hond
Sent a prync to chastise al that lond.

The said temple was turned into a Christian church by Pope Boniface.

The saide temple bilt of lym & ston, 36
Pope Boniface*, bookis specche,
Wher it was first callid Pantheon,
Set up crossis upon ech partie,
Halwid it to martirs & Marie, — 40
Yeer be yeer[e] gynnyng off Nouembre
The feeste holde, the martiloge doth remembre.

The Emperor Maurice was slain in Asia in the city of Chalcedon; and 24 years afterwards Phocas was put to death by Heraclius.

In Asie this emperour Maurice was slayn,
In the cite that callid is Calcidonye,* 44
Al his houshold and many good Romayn
Bi Phocas and Perciens, as had is in memorie.
And Phocas afftir, for al his veynglorie,
Slayn be Eraclivs, thow he* was emperour 48
Foure and twenti* wyntir and chief gouernour.

[Off Machomet the fals prophete and how he beyng
dronke was deuoured among swyn.]¹

After the death of Phocas, Muhammad appeared. He was a false prophet and a magician, born of low kindred in Arabia, and an idolater all his life.

AFFTIR the deth of Phocas, as I tolde,
That Eraclius to regne first began,
Cam Machomeet, in his tyme Iholde 52
A fals prophete and a magicien,
As bookis olde weel reherse can.
Born in Arabia but of low kynreede,
Al his lyue an idolastre in deede. 56

When he grew older he was the first to use camels for carriage, and journeyed to Egypt and studied the Bible.

And whan that he greuh to gretter age,
Deceyuable in many sondri wises,
With chamelis vsid first cariage:
Wente to Egipt [to] fette marchaundises,* 60
Fals and double, sotil in his deuises;
To Iewes & Cristene sondry tymes sent,
Lerned the Olde a[nd] Newe Testament.

37. Pope] *blotted and erased* B, J — Bonifas B — bookis] as bookis J, as bokes P.

44. callid is] is callid H — Calcidonye] Calcidoine B.

48. he] who P — thow he] he than B. 49. xxiii]ti B.

56. ydolatre R, H, R 3.

57. that] *om.* H — gretter] gret H. 59. camelis R, H, R 3.

60. to] *om.* H, R 3, P, H 5. 60 and 61 are transposed in B.

¹ MS. J. leaf 167 recto.

- As bookis olde recorde* in that partie,
 This Machomeet, this cursid fals[e] man,
 Out of Egipt faste gan hym hie
 Toward a contre callid Corozan,
 With a ladi that hihte Cardigan, —
 Thoruh his sotil fals[e] daliaunce
 Be crafft he fill into hir aqueyntaunce.
- He wrouhte [so] be his enchaumentis
 And be fals menis off nigromauncie,
 Hir enclynyng toward his ententis;
 For bothe he koude riht weel flatre* & lie.
 Saide openli that he was Messie,
 Iewes abidyng vpon his comyng,
 As grettest prophete and ther souereyn kyng.
- Thus the people he brouht in gret error
 Bi his teching & his fals doctryne;
 He wex among hem a gret gouernour.
 The saide ladi he dede also enclyne,
 As to a prophete which that was deuyne
 Sent from aboue, as she did vndirstonde;
 For which she took hym vnto hir husbonde.
- His lynage [be]gan at Hismael;
 Hadde a siknesse, fil* ofte sithes down,
 In his excus[e] seide that Gabriel
 Was sent to hym from the heuenli mansioun
 Be the Hooli Goost to his instruccion:
 For the aungel shewed hym* so sheene,
 To stonde upriht he myhte nat susteene.
- On his shuldre[s] wer ofte tymes seyn,
 Whan he to folk[is] shewed his presence,
 Milk whit doves, which that piked greyn
 Out of his' eris; affermyng in sentence
 Thei cam be grace of goostli influence
 Hym to visite, to shewe & specefie
 He was the prophete that callid was Messie.
- Newe lawes he did also ordeyne,
 Shewed signes be fals apparence;
 Lik Moises, hymself he did[e] feyne

64 This cursed man then went to Khorasan with a lady named Khadija, who was attracted by his false subtle talk

72 and fooled by his necromancy; for he was an accomplished flatterer and liar.

76

80 He openly said he was Messiah, and became a great prophet among the people; and for that reason the lady married him.

84

[p. 408] He was an Ishmaelite and an epileptic, and excused his fits by saying, "I must always fall down when the Angel Gabriel comes to instruct me."

92 Milk-white doves sat on his shoulders, by spiritual influence, he claimed; but it was only to pick grain he had put in his ears.

96

100 He made new laws and feigned to be a prophet like Moses; and as

64. recorden B. 67. Coriozan P. 68. Cardigan P.
 74. riht weel flatre] flatre weel B, J. 79. & and bi R.
 82. a] om. H. 86. fil] ful B. 90. hym] hymself B.
 92. shuldris R, R 3, H 5, shuldurs H, shuldre J, P.
 93. folkis] folk R, H 5, folke P. 101. feyne] fyne H.

- an evidence of his powers he hung pots of milk and honey on the horns of a great bull, A prophete of most excellence,
And therupon to shewe an euidence,
Smale pottis with milk & hony born, 104
Of a gret bole wer hangid on ech horn.
- symbolizing the plenty which was to come from his spiritual working. Made the peeple yiu credulite
To his doctryne and [his] froward teching:
Be mylk & hony figurid was plente, 108
Be the merit* of his gostli werking.
And thus he was at his begynnyng
Take of Sarsyns, as thei gan to [hym] drawe,
Which bi fals errour bond hem to his lawe. 112
- He soon converted the Saracens, and his clerk Sergius wrote down his laws and miracles. A clerk of his, callid Sergius,
Wrot his lawes & thes myracles thre:
First of the dowes, how thei cam to hym thus,
As heer-toforn rehersed was by me, 116
How milk & hony wer tokne[s] of gret plente,
And of the bole, afforn be crafft maad tame,
Bi fals deceitis to getyn hym a name.
- He was made a prince of the Arabs and Turks, and collecting an army, made war on Heraclius and captured Alexandria. Of Arabiens & Sarsyns, as I reede, 120
And of Turkis maad prince & gouernour,
With Hismaelites & folk of Perse & Mede
He gadred peeple, gan wexe a werreieur,
Ageyn Heraclius, the mihti emperour, 124
And vsurped to ride in tho cuntres,
Gat Alisaundre with many mo cites.
- Failing to become king, he said that he was sent to provide prophets to guide the people; and, as he was lecherous of heart, he set up an image of Venus. Of tho parties desirous to be kyng,
Of that purpos whan he was set aside, 128
To the peeple falsli dissymulyng,
Told he was sent prophetis to prouide
For tho contrees, for to been ther guide.
And for he was lecherous of corage, 132
He made of Venus sette up an image.
- He made the Saracens worship on Friday, just as the Jews do on Saturday, and told the people to drink water, although he got drunk himself on good wine. Made Sarsyns to worshep the Friday,
Semlabli his stori doth expresse,
So as Iewes halwe the Satirday, — 136
Al his werkis concludyng on falsnesse.
Whan he drank wyn [he] fill in dronk[e]nesse;
Bad the peple, lik a fals propheete,
Drynk[e] watir, & good wyn to lete. 140

109. merit] meriht B.

111. hym] om. R, H 5 — Sarazyns J.

114. thes] his H. 129. dissymulyng] dissemblyng R.

- As I seide, the heretik Sergivs,
 With hym of counsail froward & contrarie,
 Foon to our feith, he and Nostorivs,
 From hooli church[e] gretli thei gan varie. 144
 On whos errours Bochas list nat tarie
 Mor to write[n] of this Machomeete,
 A nigromancien & a fals prophete.
- Who list to seen his lawes euerichon 148
 Youe to Sarsyns, his book can ber witsesse,
 As thei be set in his Alkeroun,
 Echon in ordre groundid on falsnesse.
 Lik a glotoun deied in dronk[e]nesse, 152
 Bi excesse of mykil drynkyng wyn,
 Fill in a podel, deuoured among swyn.
- This was the eende of fals[e] Machomeete,
 For al his crafftis of nigromancie, 156
 The funeral fyn of this seudo prophete,
 Dronklew of kynde, callid hymself Messie,
 Whom Sarsyns so gretli magnefie.
 Iohn Bochas let be for a queen of Fraunce, 160
 Mor of his errours to putte in remembraunce.

[How Brounchild / queene of Fraunce slouh hir kyn /
 brought the londe in diuisioun, and aftir was
 honged / and hewen in pecys smale.]¹

- SHE cam arraied nothing lik a queen,
 Hir her vntressid; Bochas took good heed,
 In al his book he had afforn nat seen 164
 A mor woful creature in deede.
 With weeping eyen, totorn[e] was hir weede,
 Rebuking Bochas, he had lefft behynde
 Hir wrechidnesse for to putte in mynde. 168
- Vnto myn auctour she sodenli abraide, [p. 409]
 Lik a woman that wer with wo chekmaat.
 First of alle thus to hym she saide:
 "Sumtyme I was a queen of gret estat 172
 Crownid in Fraunce; but now al desolat

Bochas did not care to dwell on his errors or on those of the Nestorians; but all his false laws are to be seen in the Koran.

Finally, when drunk, he fell in a puddle and was devoured by hogs.

That was his end, for all his magic. John Bochas then turned to Brunhilde, a queen of France,

who came to him with dishevelled hair and torn garments and weeping eyes.

She said: "Once I was a great queen; but now I am desolate and almost ashamed to tell my woe.

144. thei] *om.* H. 157. pseudo H.

160. a queen of Fraunce] it did hym grevaunce H.

162-532 are omitted in H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 167 verso.

- I stonde in soth. Brunnechild[e] was my name,
Which to reherse I haue a maner shame.
- "You wrote all about Arsinoe and Cleopatra and Rosamond, and it seems you have forgotten me." Thou wer besi to write the woful caas 176
Withynne thi book off Arsynoe,
Dist seruise to queen Cleopatras,
Of Rosymounde thou writ also parde;
And among alle thou hast forgete me, 180
Wherbi it semeth thou dost at me disdeyne, —
List no parcel to writen of my peyne."
- When Bochas heard this he was embarrassed, for he knew nothing about her. "No," he replied, "I never read your story." "I'll tell it to you then." Whan Bochas herd, of cheer he wex riht sad,
Knowyng nothing of that she ded endure. 184
"I-wis," quod he, "afforn I haue nat rad
In no cronicle nor in no scripture
Of your woful froward auenture."
¶ "No?" quod she, "I pray you tak good heede, 188
So as thei fille I wil reherse in deede."
- "You women," said Bochas, "never tell anything to your own discredit." Bochas with Brunnechilde gan debate anon:
"Sothli," quod he, "this the condicioun 192
Of you women almost euerichon;
Ye haue this maner, withoute excepcioun,
Of your natural inclynacioun,
Of your declaryng this obseruauce to keepe:
Nothyng to seyn contrarye to your worshepe. 196
- "Nature teaches you to hide all your faults and to look most innocent when you have been most wicked." Nature hath tauht you al that is wrong texcuse,
Vndir a courtyrn al thyng for to hide;
Witb litil greyn your chaff ye can abuse;
On your diffautis ye list nat for to bide: 200
The galle touchid, al that ye set aside;
Shewe rosis fresshe; weedis ye leet passe,
And fairest cheer[e] wher ye most trespace.
- "And if you now tell me your story, you will shew very little of your vices, and only a fool would believe you." And yiff ye shal telle your owne tale, 204
How ye be fall[e] fro Fortunis wheel,
Ye will vnclose but a litil male,
Shewe of your vices but a smal parcel:
Brotil glas sheweth brihter than doth steel; 208
And thouh of vertu ye shewe a fair pretence,
He is a fool that yiueth to you credence."

174. Brunchildis R, Brounchilde J, Brunchildys R 3, Brunchildys H 5, Brunichilde P.

180. forgotyn R, forgotten J. 188. you] the R.

200. On] Onto R — fortabide R.

203. fairest] faireth R.

- ¶ Quo[d] Brunnechild, "I do riht weel espie
 Thou hast of wommen a fals oppynyoun,
 How that thei *can* flatre weel & lie
 And been dyuers of disposicioun; —
 Thou myhtest haue maad an excepcioun
 Of hih estatis & them that gentil been,
 Namli of me, that was so gret a queen." 212
- ¶ "Your hih estat boff Kynde hath no poweer
 To chaunge in nature nouthur cold nor heete:
 But let vs passe and leue this mateer,
 Theron tabide or any mor to plete;
 Of *your* compleynt seith to me the grete.
 Be weie of seruise to you I shal me quite,
 As ye declare take my penne & write." 220
- ¶ "Tak heed," quod she, "& *with* riht good auis
 Fro the trouthe bewar that thou nat varie!
 Whilom in France regnid kyng Clowis,
 Hadde a sone that namyd was Clotarye,
 Clothair an heir which callid was Lotarie;
 And this Lotarie, namyd the secounde,
 Hadde sonis foure, in stori it is founde. 228
- To the cronicle who *can* taken heed,
 As it is Iput in remembraunce,
 Whan ther fadir, the myhti kyng, was ded,
 Atween thes foure partid was al France,
 Ech be hymself[e] to haue *gouernaunce*,
 Be oon assent, as brothir onto brothir,
 Weryng her crownis, ech quit hem *onto* othir. 232
- The same tyme, I, callid Brunnechild, —
 Me list nat varie fro the old wrytyng, —
 Hadde a fadir namyd Leuychild,
 Of al Spayne souereyn lord and kyng.
 My saide fathir, to ful gret hyndryng
 Of bothe rewmys (the fame *ronne* ful* ferre),
 Tween Spaigne & Fraunce gan a mortal werre. 240
- The brethre foure, in Fraunce crownid kynges,
 Ageyn my fadir made strong diffence,
 Of marcial pride & fortunat chaungyngis, 244
227. Clowis] Cloduice P.
 229. an] had an R, R 3.
 241. leuygilde R.
 244. full] so B, J, P.

Said Brunhilde,
 "I see you
 have a false
 opinion of
 women; but
 you might have
 made an
 exception of
 me. I was a
 great queen."

"Your high
 estate cannot
 alter your
 nature,"
 answered
 Bochas; "but
 I'll not argue.
 Tell me your
 complaint and
 I will write
 it down."

"Be sure you
 write the
 truth," said
 she. "Once
 there was a
 king in France
 named Clovis,

and the
 kingdom was
 divided
 amongst
 his four great-
 grandchildren.

"I was the
 daughter of
 Athanagild,
 king of
 Spain, who
 unfortunately
 began a war
 on France.

"The four
 brothers
 made a
 strong
 defence,

Whan thei mette be mortal violence,
 Of sodeyn slauhtre fill suich pestilence
 On outhert parti, the feeld lik a gret flood
 With the terrible effusioun of blood. 252

and finally to
 have peace I
 was given in
 marriage to
 Sigebert, then
 reigning in
 France."

To bothe reumys the werris wer importable, [p. 410]
 Causid of deth[e] passyng gret damage;
 Souhte menys, wex be assent tretable,
 Of blood sheedyng tappese the woful rage. 256
 Bi oon accord I was youe in mariage
 To Sigibert, regnyng tho in Fraunce,
 Tween bothe rewmys to maken alliaunce."

"No, no," said
 Bochas, "that
 isn't so; we
 are not going
 to agree.
 You were first
 the wife of
 Chilperic.
 The chronicles
 say so."

¶ "Nay, nay," quod Bochas, "I deeme it is 260
 nat so;

Tween you & me ther mut begynne a striff.
 Beth auised; taketh good heed herto:
 The first assuraunce of mariage in your lyff,
 Of Chilperik ye wer the weddid wiff, 264
 Cronicles seyn, what-euer ye expresse,
 In this mateer wil bere with me witesse."

"Although some
 books have it
 as you mention,
 at any rate
 I was given
 when very
 young to
 Sigebert.

¶ "Thouh summe bookis reherse so & seyn, 268
 Lik as ye haue maad heer menciuon,
 Ther rehersaile stant in noun certeyn;
 For be thassent of outhert regioun,
 Spayne and Fraunce in ther conuencioun
 Ordeyned so in my tendre age, 272
 To Sigibert I was youe in mariage.

"It was an
 unhappy
 marriage:
 Hymenæus
 was not there,
 and Tisiphone
 and her sisters
 bore the
 torches;

Ymenivs was nat ther present,
 Whan we took our chaumbre toward niht;
 For Thesiphone, hir sustren of assent, 276
 Infernal goddassis bar the torchis liht.
 And as the torchis shewid dirk or briht,
 Therbi the peepel present, oon & alle,
 Dempte of the mariage what sholde befall. 280

and of
 old times,
 according as
 the torches
 burnt dark or
 bright, the
 marriage was
 deemed
 fortunate or
 otherwise.

This custum vsid of antiquite:
 Fro ther templis of goddis & goddassis,
 At mariages of folk of hih degre
 Torchis wer born, of whom men took witnessis, 284
 As thei wer dirk or shewed ther brihtnessis,
 The difference seyn in ech estat,
 Yif it wer toward or infortunat.

- Of this mariage short processe for to make, 288 "At my
The torchis brente, & yit thei wer nat briht, — marriage the
Shewed out komerous smokes blake; torches gave
Of consolacioun lost was al the liht. out heavy
Thus in dirknesse wastid the firste niht: 292 black smoke
Ther vers, ther songis of goddis & goddessis and turned the
Wer al togidre of sorwe and heuynessis. light to
darkness.
- Thes wer the toknis the niht of mariage, "Such were
Pronostiques of gret aduersite; 296 the prognos-
Yit of nature I hadde this auantage tics, although
Of womanheed and excellent beute; I was very
And lik a queen in stonis & perre beautiful
I was arraied, clad in purpil red, and arrayed
With a crowne of gold upon myn hed. 300 like a queen.
- Solempneli crownid queen of Fraunce, "I had a son
Which for to seen folk faste gan repaire. by Sigebert,
Of al weelfare I hadde suffisaunce, 304 the third
Clomb of Fortune ful hih vpon the staire. of the
A sone I hadde, which callid was Clotaire, name crowned
Be Sigibert, be record of writyng, in France;
Thridde of þat name in Fraunce crownid kyng. 308
- So wolde God the* day whan he was born but would to
He hadde be put in his sepulture, God he had
In sauacioun of blood shad heer-tofor: been put in
Caused the deth of many creature, his sepulchre
As dyuers bookis recorden in scripture, 312 the day he
Ground and gynnyng, as maad is mencion, was born, for
Withynne this lond of gret deuysion, he was the
cause that
many a man
died."
- He with his brethre, of whom I tolde late, 316 "Not so," said
At hym begonne the first occasioun" — Bochas, "who
¶ "Nat so," quod Bochas, "ye failen of your date. was chief cause
Who was cheef cause of [this] discencioun?" of this dis-
[¶] "Sothli," quod she, "to myn oppynyoun, 320 sension?"
Amon[g] hem-silff, I dar weel specefe, "Really," she
The cheef gynnyng was fraternal envie." replied, "I
think it was
fraternal
jealousy."
- ¶ "Keep you mor cloos; in this mateer ye faille. "Be careful,
Folwyng the traxis of your condicioun, 324 you are not
Ye halte foule in your rehersaille: telling the
For of your owne imagynacioun truth. You
Ye sewe the seed of this discencioun yourself were
chief cause."

298. womanhode R. 309. the] that B — whan] that J, om. P.
311. here befor R.

Among thes kynges, yif ye taken heed, 328
Bi which in France many man was ded."

At this Brunhilde changed her expression and grimly said to Bochas, "A few moments ago you knew very little about my life; now you sit over me as a judge.

¶ Than Brunnechild[e] gan to chaunge cheere;
To Bochas seide with face ful cruel,
"Nat longe agon thou knew nat the maneer 332
Of my lyuyng but a smal parcel;
Me seemeth now thou knowest euerideel,
So that ye may withoute lenger striff
Sitte as a iuge, that knowe so weel my lyff. 336

"When these brothers were at discord, Chilperic, brother of King Siebert, was slain,

Whan thes brethre stoden at discord, [p. 411]
Ech ageyn other bi mortal violence,
Vndir colour to tretyn of accord
With a maner feyned dilligence, 340
Chilperik ther beyng in presence,
Whilom brothir to Sigibert the kyng,
Was slayn among hem be fals conspiryng.

and also Siebert, who sought to avenge his death."

On whos deth auengid for to be, 344
As Sigibert did[e] hymself auauunce,
Among the pres he slay[e]n was parde . . ."

"No," said Bochas, "he was murdered because of your deceit and evil life.

[¶] "Nat so," quod Bochas, "but of fals gouernaunce,
Of your mysleuyng fill this vnhappi chaunce, 348
That Sigibert was moordred in sothnesse
Oonli be occasioun of your doubilnesse.

"You loved another, and through your outrage and folly the king was slain while hunting in the Forest of Compiègne."

Folwyng the traces* of newefangilnesse,
Geyn Sigibert ye wrouht[e] ful falsli, 352
Whan ye loued* of froward doubilnesse
Landrik the erl of Chaumpayne & of Bry;
For bi your outrage & your gret foly
The kyng was slay[e]n, and ye did assente, 356
In a forest on huntynge whan he wente,

"Alas," she exclaimed, "Bochas, Bochas, you know too much; but how do you know about the slaughter of Siebert, done by my assent, if you were not there?"

Which callid was the forest of Compyne."
¶ "Alas!" quod she, brak out in compleynyng,
"Bochas, Bochas, thou dost sore vndermyne 360
Alle the surfetis doon in my lyuyng!
Thou knowest the slauhtre of Sigibert the king,
Which that was wrouht, alas, be myn assent, —
How knowist thou it, that wer nat ther present? 364

329. many a R.

334. eueri] eueril R.

346. the pres] thres R.

351. traces] tras B, trace R, traces J, P.

353. loued] loueden B R.

- Of thes debatis and of al this werre,
 With rebukis rehersed heer in veyn,
 In rehersaille gretli thou dost erre;
 For which I caste — be riht weel certeyn — 368
 In my diffence to replie ageyn.
 It was nat I; for she that thou dost meene
 Was Fredegundus, the lusti yonge queene.
- This Fredegunde, thou shalt [weel] vndirstonde, 372
 Riht womanli and fair of hir visage, —
 Chilperik was whilom hir husbonde;
 For hir beute took hir in mariage.
 Bi hir treynys & hir gret outrage 376
 He was aftir, the stori who list reede,
 At myscheef slayn; thou shalt so fynde in deede.”
- [¶] “Thouh ye be langage make strong diffence
 In thes mateeres, which cause me to muse, 380
 I haue ageyn you lost my pacience,
 That so sotilli wolde yoursilf excuse.
 Contrariouli your termys ye abuse;
 For Clotaire*, I haue so rad, parde, 384
 Was nat engendred of Sigibert nor of the.
- I remembre ful weel that I haue rad
 That Childepert*, thouh ye therat disdeyne, —
 Record of auctours that prudent been & sad, — 388
 How he in trouthe was gendrid of you tweyne,
 Which in his deyng (me list nat for to feyne*)
 Leftt sonis two, the story ye may* reede, —
 Theobart & Thederik to succede.” 392
- [¶] “Bochas,” quod she, “thouh thou turne vp-so-doun
 Thes said[e] stories, rehersed heer in deede,
 Folwyng of malis thyn own* oppynyoun,
 Maugre thi wil[le], foorth I wil proceede 396
 As I began; tak therto good heede:
 First Theodorik, thou shalt vndirstonde,
 Cosyn germyn was to myn husbonde,

“You are wholly wrong. It was not I, but the lusty young Queen Fredegond whom you mean.

“Chilperic was once her husband, and it was through her wiles and outrages that he was afterwards slain.”

“Although you defend yourself well, I’ve lost patience with you for your subtle excuses.

“Clotaire was not your own son nor Sigibert’s, but Childepert was; and he left two sons, Theudebert and Theuderich.”

“Bochas, although you turn these stories upside down out of malice, I will go on as I began, in spite of you.

365. al] *om.* R.

371. Fredegundis R, R 3, Fredegundys J, H 5 — Was] It was J, P.

372. weel] *om.* J.

384. Clotaire] Colotaire B, Colotaire J, Colatayre H 5.

387. Childepert] Chilperik B, Chilperike P.

390. feyne] seyne B. 391. may] do B.

395. of malis thyn own] the malis of thyn B.

397. therto] heer to R, herto H 5.

- "Theuderich was cousin german to my husband, and he slew his brother Theudebert and all his family. Whatever you say, this is the truth." Kyng of Burgoyne that tyme, and non other. 400
 He of hatreede and indignacioun
 Slouh Theobart, which that was his brother,
 His wiff, his childre, for short conclusioun,
 Which in the myhti famous regioun 404
 Of Autrasie regnid as lord & kyng.
 What-euer thou seist, this soth & no lesyng."
- "No," said Bochas, "it was quite otherwise. I cannot let you go on in this way. Whether you like it or not, you caused Theudebert's death." ¶ "Nay," quod Bochas, "it was al otherwise;
 I may nat suffre how ye go ther among. 408
 Al this langage of newe that ye devise,
 Brouht to a preef, concludeth vpon wrong.
 What sholde we lenger this mateer drawe along?
 Yoursilf wer cause, wher ye be lothe* or fayn, 412
 Be Theodorik that Theobart was slayn.
- "And it was all because of your burning covetousness to rule the country yourself." The ground heerof gan parcel of envie,
 Bi your froward brennyng couetise,
 Which that ye hadde onli to occupie, 416
 To reule the lond aftir your owne guise.
 And yif I shal pleynli heer devise
 Of thes myscheeuys rehersed, God do boote,
 Ye wer your-silff[e] ground, cheef cropp & roote." 420
- Said Brunhilde, "I see you have lost all your reverence for me and only want to shew your cruelty." ¶ Quod Brunnechild, "I conceyue wel & se, [p. 412]
 Ye for your part haue lost al reuerence,
 Your-silf enarmed to shewe your cruelte
 Ageyn[e]s me, touchyng the violence 424
 Of too slauhtris rehersed in sentence:
 First how Theodorik his brothir slouh in deede,
 Callid Theobart, a pitous thyng to reede;
- "Afterwards Theuderich was himself poisoned and his wife and children slaughtered." Hymself[e] aftir stranglid with poisoun, 428
 His wiff, his childre hewe on pecis smale . . ."
 ¶ "As ye," quod Bochas, "mak heer mencioniun,
 Sum part is trewe, but nat al your tale;
 For I suppose ye sholde wexe pale 432
 For shame of thyng which ye canat excuse,
 Whan Theodorik begynneth you taccuse.
- "Some of this is true, but not all. You had better grow pale for shame; you slew them yourself." He put on you the crym of fals tresoun;
 Ye slouh his wiff and his childryn also; 436
 Hymself also ye moordred with poisoun:

405. Autrasie] Austriche P. 410. concludyng R.

412. lothe] leef B, wroth R, R 3, H 5.

419. do] to R, be H 5.

427. Theobart] Theodobert R,
 H 5, Theodobart R 3, Theobert P.

435. on] vpon R.

- I wolde wete what ye can seyn herto?"
 ¶ "Alas," quod she, "alas, what shal I do!
 Was neuer woman, in hih nor louh estat,
 Al thyng considred, mor infortunat!
 Fortune of me set now but litil prys,
 Bi hir froward furious violence
 Turnyng hir wheel & visage of malys,
 Causeth to me that no man yeueth credence,
 Had in despiht, void of al reuerence,
 And thoruh Fortunys mutabilite
 Sool [and] abiect and falle in pouerte.
- ¶ O Bochas Iohn, for short conclusioun,
 Thou must ageyns me þi stile now auauce.
 I haue disserued to haue punicioun,
 And alle the princis & barouns now in France
 Crie out on me & axe on me vengauce;
 Refuge is non nor recure in this thing,
 Thouth that Clotaire my sone* be crownid kyng.
- For my defaultis foul & abhomynable,
 Tofor the iuges of al the parlement
 I was foriugid & founde also coupable,
 Of euery crym convict be iugement,
 Myn accusours ther beyng present,
 Of oon & othir stondyng a gret route,
 Markid with fyngris of folk þat stood aboute.
- For verray shame I did myn eyen close,
 For them that gaured & cast on me þer siht;
 But as folk may be toknys weel suppose,
 Myn eris wer nat stoppid half ariht.
 Taken be force & lad forth with myht,
 Be the hangman drawe ouer hill & vale,
 Dismembrid aftir & hewe on pecis smale.
- With my blood the pament al bespreynt,
 Thanked be Fortune, such* was myn auenture,
 The soule partid, my bodi was so feynt.
 Who radde euer of any creature
 That mor wo or torment did endure!" —

"Alas," said she, "what shall I do! Was there ever a more unfortunate woman!"

"Fortune cares little for me now; she allows no man to believe what I say, or to hold me in respect, — abject and alone and fallen in poverty!"

"O Bochas John, I have deserved punishment and there is no refuge for me, though my son be crowned king."

"I was found guilty by the judges of all the parliament; and people pointed me out with their fingers, so that I shut my eyes for very shame."

"Taken out by force, I was drawn by the hangman and cut up into small pieces."

"Who ever read of a woman who endured more torment than I."

438. herto] therto R.

448. and] om. J.

453. 2nd on] of R.

455. Clotaire my sone] with Clotaire my soule B, R, J.

461. a] ther a R.

470. pament] paument R, pavment R 3, payvment H 5.

471. such] which B, J, P.

Praied Bochas to haue al thyng in mynde,
Write hir lyff & leue nothyng behynde. 476

Lenvoye.

The tragedy of Brunhilde is froward and grievous to read. She was deceitful and an instigator of treason.

THIS tragedie of Brunnechild the queen,
To hir stori who list yiu attendaunce,
Froward to reede, contagious to seen,
And contrarie to al good gouernaunce, 480
Born in Spayne, crownid queen of Fraunce,
Double of hir tunge, vpfynderere of tresoun,
Caused al that lond stonde at dyuisioun.

No man could escape her wiles; mistress of murder and dissension.

From hir treynys ther koude no man fleene, 484
Sours & hedspryng of sorwe & myschaunce;
Shad hony first, stang aftir as doon beene,
Hir myrre medlid with sugrid fals plesaunce.
What she saide includid variaunce, 488
Maistresse of moordre & of discencioun,
Caused al that lond stonde at dyuisioun.

The princes of Gaul could not stand her outrages and excesses, which almost brought their country to ruin.

Princis of Gaule myhte nat susteene
Gret outrages nor the gret gouernaunce 492
Nor the surfetis doon in hir yeeris greene,
Brouht that kyngdam almost to vttraunce;
Alle of assent cried on hir vengauce.
The fame aroos, how al that regioun 496
Bi hir falsnesse stood at dyuisioun.

The knife of murder was ground keen by her malice; she spared neither her kin nor her friends.

The knyff of moordre grounde was so keene
Bi hir malys of long contynuaunce,
Hir corage fret with infernal teene, 500
Spared nouter kyn nor alliaunce.
Peised hir surfetis & weied in ballaunce,
As Bochas writ, she was thocasioun
Which made al Fraunce stonde at dyuisioun. 504

¶ Here Bochas in maner excusith the [p. 413]
vorrching of Brunnechild.¹

BOCHAS astonid, gan inwardli meruaile,
Fill in a maner of ambiguite
Of Brunnechildis merueilous rehersaile, —

486. doon] *om.* R. 492. outrages] greuaunces R.

¹ The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 169 recto: "Bochas mervelyng of the malice and cruelte of Bronnchild/writeth thus."

- How any woman of resoun sholde be
 So ful of malis & froward* cruelte,
 To slen hir kyn & setten at distaunce
 Be dyuysioun al the rewme of France.
- Bochas dempte it was nat credible
 That a woman sholde be so vengable,
 In hir malis so venymous or terrible
 Of slauhtre or moordre [for] to be coupable.
 The stori suspect, heeld it but a fable,
 Onli except that she did hym excite
 With gret instance hir story for to write.
- Hir cry on Bochas was verray importune,
 To sette in ordre hir felicites
 With hir vnhappy chaunges of fortune,
 Hir disclaundres and gret aduersites,
 With hir diffame reportid in* contres;
 No verray grounde founde in bookes olde,
 But of confessioun that she hirsiluen tolde,
- That myn auctour with* solempne stile
 Reherse sholde hir deedis disclaundrous,
 Hir flouryng yeeris also to compile,
 Medlid with hir daies that wer contrarious,
 Hir fatal eende froward & furious, —
 Wherof encoumbred of verray weerynesse,
 Toward Eracliyus he gan his penne dresse.
- 508 Bochas marvelled how any woman could be so full of malice and perverse cruelty.
- 512 He thought it incredible that a woman should be so terrible in her rage as to be guilty of murder.
- 516
- 520 He held her story but a fable, except for her insistence; and it came not from old books but was her own confession.
- 524
- 528 And finally, overcome by very weariness, he turned his pen to the Emperor Heraclius.
- 532

[How Eracliyus the Emperour sustened heresyse fill
 in to dropsy and sikenesse incurabl and so
 died.]¹

- A FFTIR Phocas, with gret honour & glorie
 Crownid emperour of Roome þe cite,
 In whos tyme, lik as seith þe storie,
 The Romeyns stood in gret perplexite
 Bi them of Perse that roos with Cosdroe,
 Which took upon hym to be lord and sire,
 As a tiraunt to trouble the empire.
- 536 After Phocas became emperor the Romans were greatly embarrassed by the Persians under Chosroes,

509. froward] of B. 515. or] and J— for] om R.

523. in] be B, by J. 525. confessions R.

526. with] rehersed with B, J. 533. H begins again.

¹ MS. J. leaf 169 verso.

- who conquered
 many provinces
 in Asia, and,
 froward to
 Christ,
 besieged
 Jerusalem, until
 Heraclius
 smote off his
 head.
- Gat many prouynce & many famous rewme 540
 Thoruh al Asie, as the cronicle seith,
 Gan approche toward Iherusalem;
 Afforn the toun proudli a siege he leith,
 As a tiraunt froward to Cristes feyth. 544
 But Eraclius, maugre al his miht,
 Smet of his hed & slouh hym lik a knyght.
- In his youth
 Heraclius slew
 many Saracens,
 and was a
 famous knight
 and a seeker
 after relics.
- And bi grace, which that is dyuynne,
 This famous prince, this Eraclius 548
 In his begynning slouh many proud Sarseyn,
 Holde in tho daies notable & glorious,
 And in his conquest passyng[ly] famous.
 Dyuers reliques & the cros he souhte, 552
 And fro tho cuntres many of hem he brouht.
- No man was
 more fitted to
 rule the empire;
 but he became
 a heretic
- Was non so famous holde in his daies
 As Eraclius thempire for to guye,
 Nor mor manli founde at al assaies 556
 Of hih prowesse nor in cheualrye.
 But whan he gan susteene heresie,
 God took from hym, *witbynne* a litil space,
 His hap, his weelfare, his fortune & his grace. 560
- and upheld the
 doctrines of the
 Monarchianites.
 After that he
 was never
 fortunate.
- He gan susteene & folwe certeyn rihtis,
 Of wilfulnesse and froward fantasie,
 Of a sect callid Monachelites,
 Which is a sect of froward heresie; 564
 And sith that he drouh to that partie,
 The stori tellith, for al his hih estat,
 This Eraclius was neuere fortunat.
- Once dreaded
 on land and
 sea, Grace and
 Fortune left
 him, and he
 suffered with
 such a dropsy
 that his thirst
 could never be
 quenched.
- Wher he was first drad on se & lond, 568
 Namli off Sarsyns, for his* cheualrie,
 Grace & Fortune from hym *witbdrouh* ther hond;
 For whan that he fill into heresie,
 He was trauailed with suich a dropesie, 572
 And therwithal he hadde a froward lust
 Euere to drynk, & euere he was a-thrust.
 In tho daies founde was no leche,
 Al-be that thei wer souht *on* ech partie, 576
 The saide prince that koude wissh or teche,

549. begynning] gynnyng H. 551. passyngly] passyng
 J, R, H 5, P. 553. tho] þe H.
 558. to susteen H, to sustene R 3.
 568. first drad] drad first H, R 3. 569. for] for al B, J.
 576. that] though H — on] in R, R 3.

Hym to releue of his idropesie,
 Maad feynt & feeble *with* a gret palisie:
 Thus in siknesse he hath his daies spent,
 Be vengauce slayn *with* infernal torment. 580

Of Heraclius this was the woful cende, [p. 414]
 As is rehersed, slay[e]n with seeknesse,
 Out of this world[e] whan he sholde weende, 584
 Al hool thempire stood in gret distresse,
 Force of Sarsyns dide hem so oppresse;
 And day be day drouh [vn]to declyn
 Be his successour callid Constantyn, 588

No physician was able to relieve him, and he finally died in torment.

That was his sad end; and all the empire stood in distress because of the Saracens.

[How Constantyne the sone of Eraclius supportyng
 error and heresy was moordred in a stewe.]¹

Which was his sone, as maad is mencionn.
 In whos tyme thoruh his gret folie
 Sarsyns dide gret oppressioun,
 Spoillyng the contres of al Lumbardie. 592
 And Constantyn, of wilful slogardie,
 Wasted his daies til that he hath brouht
 Al thempire almost onto nouht.

Geyn Cristes feith in especial 596
 He gan of malys his wittis to applie,
 And was therto enmy ful mortal,
 As* cheeff supportour of fals heresie.
 And toward Roome faste he gan hym hie, 600
 Spoiled templeis of many riche image,
 And be water took aftir his passage.

To Constantynople he hasted hym ful blyue,
 Be Cecile the weie was most* meete; 604
 At Siracuse I fynde he did aryue,
 And for the sesoun was excessiff of heete,
 Which in his labour made hym for to sueete,
 And secreli he gan hymself remewe 608
 To be bathed in a preue stewe.

His son Constantine succeeded; and during his reign the Saracens did as they would,

while he wasted his days, an enemy to Christ's faith, until the empire was almost brought to nought.

He hastened from Rome to Constantino-ple, and stopping over at Siracuse, where it was very hot, secretly went to a brothel for a bath;

578. dropesie R, J. 581. torment] Iugement H.
 583. is] om. R. 595 is misplaced at foot of column R.
 596. Geyn] All R. 599. As] And B, J — fals] all H.
 603. To] om. H, R 3 — ful] om. H, H 5.
 604. Be] To — most] almost B, R, J, H 5.
 607. hym] his H. 608. remewe] renewe H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 169 verso.

- and there
his own
knights fell
upon him and
slew him.
- Of enmyte ther he was espied;
His owne knihtes, lik as it is founde,
Be conspiracioun, certeyn of them allied, 612
Fill upon hym with sha[r]pe swerdis* grounde.
And merciles, with many mortal wounde,
Thei slouh hym ther, on hym thei wer so wood,
Amyd the stewe, nakid as he stood. 616
- They chose
their own
emperor; but
Constantine,
the next heir,
- Aftir whos deth thei did hemsilf auauunce
To chese a kniht bor[c]n in Armenye,
Of thempire to take* the gouernaunce
And to supporte falsli ther partie. 620
¶ But Constantyn, succeedyng of allie,
Beyng next heir, the trouthe for to sue,
To hym that was moordred in the stue,
- a notable man,
who was wiser
than his father,
slew all the
conspirators.
- Callid Constantyn, as his fadir was, 624
Riht notable in actis marciall,
Mor wisli gouerned, stood in othir caas:
Lik a prince, be iugement roial,
Of manli herte and corage natural 628
The conspiratours first of alle he sleth,
That wer assentid to his fadris deth.
- To his great
renown he
caused 289
bishops to
assemble for
the defence
of Christ's
faith against
old heresies.
- To gret ences of his famous renoun,
Grace of God dide hym enlumyne, 632
Constantynople, in that roial toun
Olde heresie[s] to cessen and to fyne.
Too hundrid bisshoppis [eihty] & eek nyne
He made assemble, thoruh manli prouidence,* 636
Of Cristes feith to stonde at diffence.*
- He also
restored
churches
and justly
punished all
heretics, with-
out respect of
person or
favour.
- He was eek besi cherchis to restore,
Al heretikes manli to withstonde,
Ther oppynyouns examyned weel before, 640
And whan the trouthe was weel vndirstonde,
Lik Cristis kniht list for no man wonde
To pun[ys]shen hem ius[t]li be rigour,
Withoute excepcioun of persone or fauour. 644
- I read little
more about
him in Bochas
- Of hym in Bochas litil mor I reede,
Nor of his empire I fynde non oþer date, —
Spared non heretik, nouter for gold nor meede,

613. swerdis] speris B, sperys J. 619. to take] took B,
J, toke P. 623. was moordred] moordrid was H.
631. famous] fadris R. 635. eihty] om. J — eek] eke also J.
The second halves of lines 636, 37 are transposed B, J, P.
647. nor] no H.

Constantynople he passid into fate; 648 except that he
 Whan Bulgarience gan with hym debate, paid tribute to
 A froward peple, wilful & rekles, the Bulgars
 Gaff hem a tribut, he for to lyue in pes. for the sake
 of peace and
 died in Con-
 stantinople.

[How Gisulphus was slayn, and his wif ended
 mischeuesly in lecherye.]¹

NEXT cam Gisulphus to Bochas on þe ryng, 652 Gisulf and his
 A famous duk & notable in his lyff, wife Romilda
 With weeping eyen pitousli pleynyng, lived always in
 With whom also cam Rymulde his wiff, sorrow and
 Which þat lyueden euere in sorwe & striff. 656 strife, although
 Yit was she bothe of berthē & of lynage she was of an
 Riht excellent, & fair of hir visage. excellent
 family and
 very beautiful.

Sixe childre hadde this famous queen They had six
 Bi Gisulphus begetyn in mariage, 660 children, who
 Wonder semli and goodli on to seen, were at first
 And fortunat be processe of ther age, happy in spite
 Al-be ther fadir felte gret damage of their father's
 Be the werris he hadde in his lyuyng 664 wars with
 With Cathanus that was of Narroys kyng. Cakanus, King
 of the Avars,

This Cathanus with many strong bataille [p. 415] who slew Gisulf
 Is descendid, and took the weie riht and conquered
 Of duk Gisulphus the londis to assaile; 668 all his land.
 Togidre mette in steel armyd briht;
 Gisulphe slayn; his peple put to fliht.
 And Cathanus with strong & myhti hond
 Took pecessioun, conquered al his lond. 672

Aftir whos deth Romulde the duchesse, Romilda
 Gretli astoned, pale of hir visage, retired with
 To the castel off Forgoil gan hir dresse her knights to
 With hir knihtis of strong & fel corage. 676 the castel of
 Cathanus made aftir his* passage, Foroiulanum;
 Leide a siege, caste hym to iupartē
 His lyff, his bodi rather than departe.

649. Bulgariens R, H, R 3. 655. Romilda P.

663. felte] fell in R. 664. the] ther R.

665. Cathanus] Cathamus J, Cathenoyes H, Cakanus P—Nar-
 roys] Bauars P.

673. Rymulde H, J, Romilde P.

676. hir] his R. 677. his] hir B.

¹ MS. J. leaf 170a.

- and as she stood on the wall and saw Cacus riding about in armour
- Aboute the castel armyd as he rood, 680
 Lik a prince sat knihtli on his steede,
 Vpon the wallis as Romulduus stood,
 Fresshli beseyn[e] in hir purpil weede,
 And of the seege gan to taken heede, 684
 Hir look, vnwarli, as she cast a-side,
 And sauh the kyng tofor the castel ride,
- and looking like a prince and manly knight, she fell in love with him,
- So lik a prince and a manli kniht;
 She gan on hym looke wondir narwe: 688
 The god of loue persed thoruh hir siht,
 Vnto hir herte markid hir with his arwe;
 The fry tyndis of his brennyng harwe
 Made the soil so pliaunt of hir thouht, 692
 That of hir castel she set almost riht nouht.
- and, agreeing to yield the castle, presented herself to him in his tent.
- And for tacomplishe the hool entencioun
 Of hir fals lust in al maner thyng,
 She is agreed be composicioun 696
 To yeeld the castel in haste onto the kyng,
 She for to come withoute mor tarieng,
 Lik a duchesse hirsiluen to presente,
 Wher-as the kyng sat armyd in his tente. 700
- Her people were taken prisoner, her four sons fled. Cacus lay with her one night and then despised her.
- The peple withynne prisoneeres take,
 Hir foure sonis took hem to the fliht;
 Loue caused that she hath forsake
 Hir blood, hir kyn, wher it wer wrong or riht. 704
 And Romulde the space but of* a niht
 With Cathanus hadde al hir deliht,
 And euere aftir he hadde hir in despiht.
- Repulsed by the king, she cohabited with twelve men of his household and afterwards sank so low as to be acquainted with the grooms of the stable
- And bi the kyng whan she was refusid, 708
 Tuelue in noubre that duelled in his hous
 Most frowardli hir beute haue abusid,
 Of hir nature she was so lecherous.
 Al to reherse it is contagious, 712
 How she wex aftir so abhomynable
 To been aqueynted with gromys of þe stable.
 It wer but veyn to tarie on this mateere
 Or any long processe for to make, 716
 Hir stori is contagious [for] to heere.

682. Rymuldis H — Romulduus stood] Rymulduus abood J, Romilde abode P.

691. fry tyndis] fire teyndis R. 693. nouht] om. R.

698. withoute] with R. 705. but of] of al B, J.

715. on] in R, H, R 3. H 5.

But fynalli at myscheef she was take,
 For a spectacle fichched on a stake,
 Set up alofte, myn auctour tellith so, 720
 Deide in distresse for constreynt of hir wo.

It is a foul
 story; and
 finally she was
 impaled on a
 stake and died.

[Off Iustynyan the fals extorcioner exiled by Patry-
 cyan/after bothe nose & eien kut from his hede.]¹

BY example, so as fressh armure
 Thoruh long[e] resting leseth his brihtnesse,
 Fret *with* old rust, gadreth gret ordure, 724
 Is diffacid of his fressh cleernesse,
 Semblabli the Romeyns hih prowessse
 Gan for tappalle, alas, & that was routhe! —
 Whan thei hem gaff to necligence & slouthe. 728

Who in kniethod list haue experience
 Must eschewe riotous idilnesse,
 Be prouident *with* enteer dilligence,
 Large *with* discrecioun, manli with gentillesse, 732
 To hih emprises his corage dresse,
 And be weel war, upon ech partie,
 Hym to preserue fro rust of slogardie.

The which[e] vice gretli hath appeired, 736
 As is remembrid of old antiquite,
 Caused ofte Romeyns be dispeired,
 Be froward lustis hyndred ther cite
 And appallid ther old prosperite; 740
 For which defautis cam to pleyne blyue
 To Iohn Bochas emperour[e]s fyue.

As many kynges of the same noumbre,
 Which be slouthe wern afforn oppressid, 744
 Whom that slouthe whilom did encoumbre,
 Ther names heer bi and bi expressid,
 To myn auctour thei han her cours Idressid
 Lik ther degrees to speke in wordes fewe: 748
 ¶ Iustynyan first did* his face shewe,
 Nat Iustynyan whilom so vertuuous, [p. 416]
 And of prudent gouernaunce so notable,
 But Iustynyan Temerarivs, 752

Just as new
 armour if
 unused
 becomes
 tarnished, so
 the Romans
 lost their
 prowess when
 they grew
 slothful.

Knights must
 avoid riotous
 idleness and
 keep them-
 selves from
 the rust of
 indolence.

It was this
 vice that hurt
 the prosperity
 of Rome; and
 five emperors
 and five kings
 came to Bochas
 to complain
 their sloth.

Justinian
 Temerarius,

723. resting] rustyng H. 738. disespeyred H.

744. slouthe] slouhe R. 749. did] gan B, J, P.

751] And so notable off prudent gouernaunce R, R 3, H 5, &
 so noble of prudent gouernaunce H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 170c.

- an irresponsible man of bad character, was exiled by Patrician for extortion, Double of his deedis, fals & deceyuable,
Of his promys dyuers & vnstable,
Whilom exilid be Patrician
For extorsions that he in Roome gan. 756
- and his eyes and nose cut off. Leontius was put down by Tiberius, His nose, his eyen Patrician gaf in charge
To be kut of, be furious cruelte.
And of thempire þat was so wide & large,
¶ Leoncius next gouernid the cite; 760
And thuruh Fortunis mutabilite
The same Leonce be Tiberie was cast down,
His eien put out, deied afftir in prisoun.
- and Tiberius was served in the same fashion and imprisoned for a thief. ¶ Tiberius afftir seruid on the same, 764
His nose kut of, from his see put down;
For a rebuk and a perpetuel shame,
To a cite that callid was Cersoun,
Witbout merci, fauour or raunsoun 768
Exilid he was, prisowned as a theeff,
Bi long[e] turment deide at myscheef.

[How Philip the Emperour died at myschef.]¹

- Philippicus was an odious heretic and iconoclast, who knocked down the images of the holy saints, ¶ Next to Bochas cam Phelipp on the ring,
Whos empire no while did endure. 772
Lik an heretik cursid of lyuyng
And odious to eueri creature,
Beet down images & many fresch picture
Of hooli seyntes, which in ther templis stood, 776
Wherbi Romeyns dempte that he was wood.
- for which the Romans thought he was mad, and Anastasius put him out of the empire and blinded him. Pursuid he was bi a manli kniht
Callid Anastaise, and put out of his place;
And in Cicile, of verray force & myht 780
He did his eyen out of his hed arace,
Be iugement his visage to difface,
Semlabli as he be gret outrages
Of Cristes cherch diffaced the images; 784
- Anastasius then took possession, and the empire was divided. Deide at myscheeff dirkid with blyndnesse.
¶ Than Anastaise took possioun,
In whos tyme, bookis ber witnesse

755. Patrician] Leoncian P. 764. Tibery H — on] of J, P.
769. he was] was he R.
778. manli] myhty H. 779. Anastasius P, anastasië R.
780. in] om. R. 784. cherch] Chirchis R.

¹ MS. J. leaf 170d.

And cronicles make mencion, 788
 Of thempire was maad dyuisioun:
 That first was oon, partid [was] on tueyne
 Wherof myn auctour in maner doth compleyne.

¶ **Bochas in maner compleynyth of þingis deuidid
 in too.¹**

<p>AS he reherseth in his oppynyoun And therupon doth a ground deuise, Cause & rote of ther deuisioun Took original of fals couetise; And ceriously he tellith heer the guise, Into the cherch whan richesse brouht <i>in pride</i>, Al perfeccioun anon was set aside.</p> <p>The poore staf and potent of doctryne, Whan it wer chaungid & list nat for tabide In wilful pouert, but gan anon declyne, On statli palfreyis & hih hors to ride, Sharp heires wer[e]n also leid aside, Tournid to copis of purpil & sangwyn, Gownis of scarlet furrid <i>with</i> hermyn.</p> <p>Slendre fare of wyn & water cleer, <i>With</i> abstinence of bred maad of whete Chaungid tho daies to many fat dyneer, <i>With</i> confect drynk of ipocratis* sueete; And sobirnesse dide his boundis lete, Scarsnesse of foode leffte his olde estat, With newe excesse gan wexe delicat.</p> <p>Gostly lyuyng in the cherche appallid, Caused Greekis withdrawe hem <i>in sentence</i> From the pope, in Petris place stallid, And list to hym do non obedience. Fals auarice caused this offence, That the Grekis dide hemsilf deuide Fro the Romeyns for ther gret[e] <i>pride</i>.</p>	<p>792 As Bochas says, the cause of this division was covetous- ness; and when wealth brought pride into the church, all perfection was abandoned.</p> <p>796</p> <p>800 When the monks rode on stately palfreys and high horses, and laid aside their haircloth for scarlet gowns trimmed with ermine,</p> <p>804</p> <p>808 and exchanged their simple fare for rich feasting, and no longer kept sober,</p> <p>812</p> <p>816 the spiritual life of the church grew faint, and the Greeks withdrew themselves from the Romans.</p>
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790. 2nd was] *om.* R.

791. myn auctour in maner] in maner myn Auctour H.

796. the] his R. 809. confect] conforte H. confort
 R 3 — of ipocratis] & ipocras B, J, of ypocras R.

¹ *The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 170d: "How Anastace was compellid to leve the Empire to be a preste and lyve in pouerte."*

- Thus covetous-
ness and evil
ambition
brought
in division.
Take record of
Anastasius, who
was put out
of the empire
by Theodosius,
- Thus coucitize and [fals] ambicioun 820
Did first gret harm among* the *spiritual*,
Brouht in discord and dyuysioun
Among princis in ther estat royal.
Who clymbeth hiest, most percilous is his fall, 824
Record I take of forseid Anastase,
Be Theodosie put out of his place.
- and finally
took orders and
died in poverty.
- This Theodosie dide his besi peyne [p. 417]
On Anastace suich werre for to make, 828
That maugre hym he did hym so *constreine*,
That he was fayn thempire to forsake.
For feer and dread he did upon hym take
The oordre of preest from the imperial see, 832
Content with lital, lyued in pouertee.

[How the hede of Lupus kyng of Lumbardie was
smet of by Grymaldus.]¹

- Four mighty
kings of
Lombardy
appeared to
Bochas, with
hair grown long
and beards
reaching to the
navel.
- A**FFTIR thes chaunges remembrid be writingis,
Lik as I haue told heer in partie,
Cam to Bochas foure myhti kingis 836
Regnyng echon of old in Lumbardie.
Afftir the maner and guise of barbarie
Thei wern arraied, & in ther passage
With her forgrowen bodi and visage. 840
- They wore
many-coloured
garments, broad
baldrics, large
golden buckles
and pendants,
breeches
embroidered
with pearls,
- Ther berdis rauhte ouer ther noueue down;
Ther garnementes of colours manyfold,
With brode baudrikis enbracid enviroun,
Large bokelis & pendauntis of fyn gold. 844
Ther brech enbrowdid afftir the guise of old,
Fret with perle, leg stukkid to the kne,
Pleynyng to Bochas of ther aduersite.
- and shoes laced
with gold wire
and set with
strange stones.
- Ther shon wer racid fresshli to the ton, 848
Richeli transuersed with gold weer,
And theron sette many a straunge ston,
Geyn Phebus liht that shon ful briht & cleer.
Thes Lombard kynges gan tapproche neer, 852

820. fals] *om.* J, R 3, H 5. 821. among] in B, J, R.
825. of] on H. 835. partie] *Iupartye* H.
841. rauhte] *rauh* H — 2nd ther] *þe* H, the R 3, J.
846. stukkid] *stokkid* H. 848. to] *vnto* R.
850. straunge] *riche* H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 171a.

And first of alle the proude kyng Lupus
Vnto Bochas gan his compleynt[e] thus:

¶ “Bochas,” quod he, “as for my partie,
For to reherse be short conclusioun,
On Grymaldus, a prince of Lumbardie,
Hath me enchacid out of my regioun
And cruelli me cheynid in prisoun.
And aftir that he did a sergaunt sende,
Smet of myn hed, and ther I maad an eende.”

Lupus com-
plained that
856 Grimoaldus
first chased
him from his
kingdom and
then sent a
sergeant to
smite off his
head.
860

[How the hede of Alexyus was smet of by Comper-
toun.]¹

Aftir this eende rehersed of Lupus,
For to declare his mortal heynesse,
¶ Next in ordre ther cam Alexius,
A Lombard kyng famous of richesse,
Which took on hym of surquedous prowesse
For to compasse the destruccioun
Of a prince Icallid Compertoun,

Alahis took
upon himself
of pride to
destroy
864 another
Lombard
prince
called
Gunibert;

Which wered also a crowne in Lumbardie.
Atwixe bothe was werre & gret distaunce,
But al the people and lordis of Pauye
Witb myhti hond and marcial gouernaunce
The saide Alex brouhte to myschaunce;
And Compertoun, escapid from al dreed,
Of mortal vengauce leet smyten of his hed.

868
but the people
of Pavia
defeated him,
and he too
lost his head.

872

[How Arypertoun was drowned with his rychesse.]²

Aftir whos deth pitousli pleynnyng,
¶ Tofor Iohn Bochas cam Aripertoun,
Of Lumbardie whilom lord & kyng,
Which, lik a fool, of hih presumpcioun
Al causeles took occasioun
Of volunte, ther is no mor to seye,
Ageyn the duk off Bagorois to werreye.

876 Aribertus,
like a fool,
made war on
the duke of
Bavaria,

880

864. Alexius] Alahus P. 868. Compertoun] Guniberte P.

873. Alex] Alexius R, Alahis P. 877. Arithberton P.

879. Which] & H — hih] his R.

882. Bagorois] Baiernoys H, R 3, Bauaroies P.

¹ MS. J. leaf 171b.

² MS. J. leaf 171b.

and losing,
fled to
Pavia with
his treasure,

Thes princis tweyne taken haue the feeld,
Of* Ariperton the parti gan appeire;* 884
His aduersaire anon as he beheeld,
His coward herte gan to disespere.
Into Pauye for feer he gan repeire,
Took his tresour in purpos anon riht, 888
For verray dreed to take hym to the fliht.

and then
took ship
and was
drowned in a
tempest. Such
is the fate of
those who
begin predatory
wars against
their
neighbours.

Took a vessel and entrid is the se,
With sodeyn tempest assailed & dirknesse,
His barge pershid bi gret aduersite 892
And he was drownid with al his gret richesse.
Loo, heer the fyn of worldli wrechidnesse,
Namlī of them, to gete gret tresours
That gyne werre ageyn ther neih[e]bours. 896

[How Dediere by pope Adryan and Charles of
Fraunce was put to flight & died at mischef.]¹

Next,
Desiderius,
king of
Lombardy,
appeared.
Whereas his
father Agilulf
had offended
the pope,

NEXT to Bochas, with heuy look & cheere,
Kyng of Lumbar shewed his presence,
Callid in his tyme noble Dedieer,
Notable in armys & of gret excellence. 900
And wher his faddir hadde don offence
To the pope and ful gret duresse,
This kyng caste the damages to redresse.

Desidarius
sought to make
amends by
presenting the
Holy See with
the city of
Faenza,

Agistulphe was his fadris name, 904
Which to the pope did gret aduersite;
For which his sone to encrece his fame,
Of roial fredam and magnanymyte
And off benigne liberalite, 908
Gaff to the pope with humble reuerence
A statli cite that callid is Fayence.

together
with great
treasure and a
mighty castle
in Ferrara.

Therwith he gaff gret tresour & gret good, [p. 418]
As he that list of freedam nat to spare, 912
A mihti castel which on Tibre stood
Withynne the boundis & lordship of Ferare,
Which is a cite, pleynli to declare,

884. Of] And B, And of J, P — appeire] to appeire B, to peyre R, H 5. 885. aduersaries H.

892. His barge] And he was H. 893. And] for H.

899. Dedieer] Desidere P. 904. Agistulphe] Agitulphe P.

910. is] was H — Fayence] Fauence P. 913. castel] Cite H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 171 verso.

- Of antiquite, myn auctour tellith so, 916
 And stant upon the ryuer of the Po.
- This Dedieer regnyng in Lumbardie
 Gan wexe famous at his [be]gynnyng,
 Hadde gret name vpon ech partie; 920
 But in this eerthe is nothing abidyng:
 Al stant on chaung; & Fortune in werkyng
 Is founde vnstable & double of hir visage,
 Which of this kyng chaunged the corage. 924
- Ther he was first large on eueri side,
 Liberal founde in many dyuers wise,
 His goodliheed was chaungid onto pride
 And his largesse onto couetise. 928
- Of doublenesse he gan anon deuise
 To cleyme ageyn, as ye shal vndirstonde,
 His seide giftis out of the popis honde.
- Which Dedieer hadde made alliaunce, 932
 As the cronicle maketh mencion,
 With kyng Pepyn regnyng tho in France.
 Afftir whos deth, to haue pocioun
 And ful lordship of al that regioun, 936
 He gan of newe fallyn at distaunce
 Bothe with the pope & with the king of France.
- Of presumpcioun thes werris he began
 Ageyn his promys, of double variaunce; 940
 Pope in tho daies was hooli Adrian,
 Which to stynte this* trouble & gret myschaunce,
 Requered helpe of the king of Fraunce.
 And grete Charlis, in Bochas as I reede, 944
 Cam to the pope to helpyn in this neede.
- Charlis that tyme was trewe* protectour
 To hooli cherche, ther pauys and diffence;
 Which of hool herte and dilligent labour 948
 With Dedieer be manli violence
 He mette in Tuscan, of kingli* excellence;
 Hadde a bataile to preeve ther bothe myht:
 Charlis victor; Dedier put to fliht. 952

He grew famous and prospered; but nothing abides here on earth; Fortune is unstable,

and the king became proud and covetous and decided to take his gifts back again.

He had also allied himself with Pepin of France, so as to get possession of his kingdom after his death,

and now he fell out with both Charlemagne, who succeeded Pepin, and Pope Adrian.

Charlemagne was a true protector of the church, and, meeting Desiderius in Tuscany, put him to flight

925. Ther he] The R. 929. anon he gan R.
 938. 2nd with] om. H, R, R 3. 939. thes] the R.
 942. this] the B, J, P. 945. this] his R.
 946. trewe] cheef B, chief J, P.
 950. knigh] knihtli B, J — of] & H. 951. bothe] bothis R.

and laid siege
to Pavia, where
he took refuge.
Starvation
forced him to
surrender,

As I fynde, he fledde into Pavia;
Worthi Charlis leide his* siege afforn,
Constreynd hem upon ech partye,
For lak of vitaille thei wer almost lorn; 956
Thei wanted[e] licour, greyn and corn.
Be sodeyn constreynt & gret aduersite
To kyng Charlis thei yald up the cite.

and he was sent
to prison in
France, where
he died at
mischief. He
was the last
king of the
Lombards.

Kyng Dedieer was sent into Fraunce, 960
With myhti cheynis fetrid in prisoun;
Lik a wrech, in sorwe & in* penaunce,
Deide at myscheef; ther geyned no raunsoun,
Which hadde afforn so gret pecessioun. 964
Aftir whos day, as be old writyng,
Among Lumbardis was neuer crownid kyng.

[Off pope Iohn a woman with child and put doun.]¹

Rounded and
shorn like a
bishop and
wearing the
broad tonsure
and vestments
of a priest,
Pope John, a

AFFTIR thes princis rehersed heer-toforn,
Drownid in teres cam a creature, 968
Lik a bisshop roundid* & Ishorn;
And as a prest she had a brod tonsure,
Hir apparaille outward & vesture,
Beyng a woman, wherof Bochas took heed, 972
Lik a prelat shapyn was hir weede.

woman, a
beardless
prelate,
who unworthily
sat in the chair
of St. Peter,
appeared
drowned in
tears before
Bochas.

She was the same that of yore agon
Vnworthily sat in Petris place;
Was afftirward callid Pope Iohn, 976
A berdles prelat, non her seyn on hir face.
Of hir berthe namyd was the place,
Mayence, a cite stonyng in Itaille,
Vpon the Reen, ful famous of vitaille. 980

In her youth
she devoted
herself to the
liberal sciences

In hir youthe and in hir tendre age
Forsook hir kyn, and in especial
Caste she wolde for hir auauntage

954. his] a B, J, P. 959. thei] om. R, H, R 3, H 5.
961. myhti] om. R. 962. 2nd in] gret B, J, H 5.
969. roundid] Iroundid B, I rounded J.
972. wherof] theroff R. 973. hir] his R.
975. Vnworthily] vnworthly R.
979. Mayence] Magonice P — stonyng] not standing P.
980. of vitaille] it is no faile H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 171 verso.

- Yiue hir to konyng, bodi, herte & all. 984 and became famous for her learning.
 And [in] the science[s] callid liberall,
 In alle seuene, bi famous excellence,
 Bi gret studie she hadde experience,
 Hir name kouth in many dyuers lond. 988 She went to England, where all people thought she was a man, and taught grammar, logic and rhetoric in Rome.
 To shewe hir cunningg first whan she began,
 Serchyng prouynces cam to Ing[e]lond,
 No wiht supposyng but that she was a man;
 Cam to Roome, hir stori telle can, 992 and rhetoric in Rome.
 Tauhte gramer, sophistre [and] logik,
 Redde in scoolis openli rethorik.
 In the tyme of emperour Lotarie, [p. 419] In the time of the emperor
 Afftir the deth, as maad is mencionn, — 996 Lothair, after the death of Pope Leon, she was herself made pope by election and
 Fro myn auctour yif I shal nat varie, —
 That the pope which callid was Leoun,
 The saide woman be eleccioun
 Istallid was, supposyng no wiht than 1000
 Be no tokne but that she was a man.
 The book of sortis aftir that anon,
 Of aenture tournid up-so-down;
 She was callid & namyd Pope Iohn,
 Of whos natural disposicioun 1004 called Pope Iohn. Falling into temptation, she was gotten with child, delivered at St. Lateran
 Fill bi processe into temptacioun:
 Quik with childe, the hour cam on hir than;
 Was delyuered at Seynt Ihon Lateran. 1008
 Afftir put down for hir gret outrage,
 I wil on hire spende no more labour,
 But passe ouer al the surplusage
 Of hir lyuyng and of hir gret errour; 1012 and afterwards put down for her great outrage.
 Tourne my stile to themperour
 Callid Arnold, & write his pitous chaunce,
 Sone to Charlis, the grete kyng of Fraunce.

[How arnold son to Charles of Fraunce was eten
 with lys and so died.]¹

- To this Charlis, as bookis determyne, 1016 Arnulph, a natural son of Carloman, king of France,
 He was sone nat born in mariage,
 But begetyn of a concubyne;

991. No wiht] Nouht R, nouht H.
 1015. Charlis the grete] Charlemaine P.

993. and] om. R.

¹ MS. J. leaf 172 recto.

- undertook to
reign without
title as emperor
of the Romans. Took upon hym of surquedous outrage,
Witbout title of berth or lynage, 1020
To succede be fraude and fals labour
Among Romeyns to regne as emperour.
- But he spent
all his days
in mischief and
died eaten up
by lice and
worms. He was vngacious sitting in that estat,
In myscheeff spent his daies euerichon, 1024
Wit lees and wermys maad infortunat,
Thoruh skyn and flessch fret onto þe bon.
Craft of medecyne nor socour was ther non,
So deepe [he] was fret in his entraille; 1028
Deide in distresse; no leche myhte auaille.

¶ Thauctour geyn the pride of Princis.¹

- Bochas pauses
for a while to
write angrily
of the sins of
tyrants,
counselling
them to
remember this
proud Arnulph. **M**YN auctour Bochas stynt heer for a while,
Sharped his penne of entencioun,
Gan of angre to transport his stile 1032
To write off tirauntis for ther* transgressioun,
Moor wood & fell than any scorioun,
Them counseillyng, whan thei be most bold,
For to remembre on this proude Arnold. 1036
- who was not
attacked by
wolves or lions
or ravenous
bears or wild
boars or
mighty
champions, but
murdered by
worms. He ne was nat in his pride assailed,
Nat with wolues, tiges nor leouns,
With rauynous beres nor wilde boor* trauailed,
Nowthir with othir myhti champiouns, 1040
Which haue conquered many regiouns;
But with wermys engendrid of his kynde
The saide Arnold was moordrid, as I fynde.
- Although of the
blood of
Charlemagne,
he was so
tormented
by lice and
worms that he
could not
endure the pain. In suich disioynt the sayd[e] Arnold stood, 1044
With lees and wermys fret ageyn nature,
That was so nih[e] born of Charlis blood,
Impotent the peyne to endure.
Which was in sooth an vnkouth auenture, 1048
That a prince myht nat be socourid
Of smale wermys for to be deuourid.
- A good example
for princes to
consider how A gret example, who list considre & see,
To princis alle for tabate ther pride. 1052
Lat hem considre ther fragilite,

1023. that] his H — estat] state R. 1031. of] for H.
1033. for ther] the B, J. 1035. counseillyng] counsailid H.
1036. on] vpon H. 1039. nor] wit H — boor] wolues B,
bores J, P. 1044. Arnolphe R. 1046. nihe] myhty R.

¹ The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 172 recto: "Bochas counceyleth princys to remembre on Arnold."

- To seen an emperour [for] to abide*
 Thassaut of wermys — & ley ther bost aside,
 In this Arnold wisli aduertise 1056
 How God hath poweer ther pompe to chastise.
 Deth of Arnold dide my penne encoumbre
 For the gret abhomyacioun.
 ¶ Than onto Bochas cam the tuelue in noumbre, 1060
 Callid Pope Iohn, as maad is menciouan,
 Entryng be fraude and fals eleccioun,
 To Goddis lawe froward & contrarie,
 Nat lik a pastor but a mercenarie. 1064
- God has power
to chastise
their pomp.
- The death of
Arnulph dis-
gusted me.
Then came
Pope John,
called the
Twelfth,

[Howe pope Iohn the xijthe for lechery & vicious
 lif was put down.]¹

- Callid afforn he was Octauyan,
 Nothing resemyng Petris gouernaunce.
 Fro the tyme in Roome that he began
 To sitte as pope, he gaf his attendaunce 1068
 To folwe his lust & his flessfli plesaunce, —
 In haukyng, huntyng stood his felicite,
 And among women conuersaunt to bee.
 Vnto surfet, riot, glotonye [p. 420] 1072
 He gaff hym hooli; took of God non heede;*
 Gretli disclaudrid he was of lecherie;
 Kepte in his court, withoute shame or dreed,
 A noumbre of wommen, in cronicle as I reed. 1076
 Too cardinales of purpos did entende
 His vicious lyff to correcte & amende.
 And of entent thes cardynalis too
 The chersch esclaudrid cast hem to redresse; 1080
 Made lettres, sent hem to Otto,
 Duk of Saxonye*, that he sholde him* dresse
 Toward Roome, and of [his] hih noblesse
- who entered
by fraud
and spent
his time in
hawking,
hunting and
in intercourse
with women,
- and gave him-
self wholly to
riot, gluttony
and excess.
He took no
heed of God;
and when two
cardinals tried
to correct him
- and sent
letters to Otto,
Duke of
Saxony,
requesting him
to reform the
mischief,

1054. to abide] tabide B — for] om. H, R, J, R 3, H 5.
 1060. the] ther H, R 3. 1062. Entryng] Entrid R.
 1064. but] lik H.
 1073. non] no R — heede] keepe B, kepe J, P.
 1080. esclaudrid] disclaudrid H, ensklandrid H 5.
 1082. Saxonye] Saxoyne B, Saxone R — him] hem B.
 1083. hih] om. R, J.

¹ MS J. leaf 172 recto.

- On hooli cherche to haue compassioun, 1084
 Make of this myscheef iust reformacioun.
- John cut off the
 nose of the one
 and the hand
 of the other. This Pope Iohn, whan he hath parceyued
 Of his* cardynales the maner of writyng,
 And how the duk the lettres hath* reseceyued, 1088
 He to do vengau[n]ce made no tarieng;
 Bood no lenger, this iugement yiuung:
 Kitt of the nose felli of the ton,
 Hond of the tothir; and ech was callid Iohn. 1092
- The Emperor
 wrote to him,
 but without
 avail; and
 finally he was
 deposed by
 cardinals.
 I don't want
 to write any
 more about him. The emperour did[e] his lettres sende
 To this pope of hool affecciou[n],
 Of his defaultis he sholde hym amende.
 But ther was fou[n]de no correccioun; 1096
 For which he was deposid & put down
 Bi cardynalis for his cursidnesse;
 Me list no mor write of his wrechidnesse.
- Seeing all this
 mischief, my
 author prepared
 openly to
 describe the
 faults of
 prelates, ¶ For his defaultis & his gret outrage 1100
 This Iohn put down, as ye haue herd deuise,
 Myn auctour aftir kauht a gret corage,
 Seyng this myscheef in many sondri wise,
 In hooli cherch[e] which that did arise 1104
 Among prelatis, cast hymselfuen blyue
 Ther diffautis openli descryue,
- their pride
 and their
 presumption;
 but remembering
 a verse in the
 Psalter, "Do
 not touch my
 prophets nor
 malign against
 them," Of ther pride and ther presumpcioun.
 And whil he gan studie in this mateer, 1108
 He gan remembre anon in his resoun
 Vpon a vers write[n] in the Sauteer:
 "Touche nat my prophetis, ne neih hem nat to ner,
 Nor ageyn hem, be[th] war in deed & thouht, 1112
 In no wise that ye maligne nouht."
- he withdrew
 his hand
 and turned to
 Duke Charles
 of Lorraine. For this cause, as ye shal vndirstonde,
 Touchyng this mateer, pley[n]li as I reede,
 Myn auctour [Bochas] gan withdrawe his honde, 1116
 Lefft his purpos, and forth he gan procede, —
 To whos presence, or that he took heede,
 Cam a prince, Duk Charlis of Loreyne;
 Hym besouhte to write his greuous peyne. 1120
1085. reformacioun] informacion R.
 1087. his] thes B, thise J, these P. 1088. hath] haue B.
 1096. was] om. R. 1101. Iohn] Pope R.
 1105. cast] cauht H. 1110. writen] om. R.
 1111. my] om. R. 1112. beth war] bewar B, J.
 1117. gan] can R.

[Off Charles of Loreyn confounded with hunger.]¹

<p>¶ This duk of Loreyne, as ye shal conceyue, Hadde werre with the kyng of Fraunce Callid Hewe Capet; and, as I apparceyue, An archebishop, the kyng to do plesaunce, Of hatreede made his ordenaunce [A]geyn this duk, await upon hym kepte, That he hym took abedde whil* he slepte.</p> <p>The said bisshop gan falsli vndermyne This worthi duk, bi ful fals tresoun, Which, as I fynde, was callid Ancelyne; And he was bisshop that tyme of Leoun. Which be fraude & fals collusioun Took this prince that was duk of Loreyne, And to the kyng he brouht hym bi a treyne.</p> <p>Bi whom he was delyuered to prisoun, To Orlyanes, and with cheynis bounde. What was his eende is maad no mencion; But in a pet horrible & profounde, Mischeeff with hunger did hym so confounde, That, I suppose, this duk of Loreyne Consumyd was for constreynt of his peyne.</p>	<p>1124</p> <p>1128</p> <p>1132</p> <p>1136</p> <p>1140</p>	<p>This duke was at war with Hugh Capet and was taken in bed by an archbishop,</p> <p>Ascelin of Laon,</p> <p>who delivered him to the king, who in turn sent him to prison in Orleans, where he was confined in a horrible deep pit and probably died of hunger.</p>
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[How kyng Salamon whilom kyng of Hungery was put to flight.]²

<p>A FFTIR to Bochas in noumbre <i>per cam</i> doun Princis foure; and ech for his partie Ther greuys tolde; and first king Salamon, Which that whilom regned in Hungrie, Bothe fool & coward, bookis specefie, Void of resoun, noised of ignoraunce, And, at a poynt, koude no purueiaunce.</p> <p>Fortune also did at hym disdeyne; For he was nouthur manli nor coraious. Ageyn[es] whom wer worthi princis tweyne;</p>	<p>1144</p> <p>1148</p>	<p>Four princes then appeared to Bochas. The first, King Salomon of Hungary, a fool and a coward,</p>
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1123. Hewe] huhe R, heugh H, hugh J, R — apparceyue] parceyue R. 1127. whil] whan B.

1128. The] This R, H. 1130. Which] & H—was] he was H.

1135. delyuered] committid H. 1144. Ther] That R.

¹ MS. J. leaf 127c.

² MS. J. leaf 127d.

was chased
out of his
region by two
notable and
virtuous prin-
ces, Ladislaus
and Geysa,

Zerta was oon, with Laudisalus, 1152
Famous in armys, notable and vertuou; —
Bothe attonis geyn Salamon cam down
And made hym fleen out of his regioun.

and Bochas
wrote no more
about him.

Thuruh his vnhappi froward cowardise, [p. 421] 1156
Ther was in hym founde no diffence;
Fliht was his sheelde, list nat in no wise
Geyn his enmyes make resistence;
Faiiled herte to come to presence 1160
To saue his lond, he dradde hymselfe so sore,
Of whom Bochas writ in his book no more.

[How Petro kyng of Hungery was slayn.]¹

King Pietro of
Hungary was
malicious and
foolish enough
to offend Charles
of France, who
put out his
eyes and slew
him.

¶ Anothir kyng heer put in remembrance
Callid Petro, regnyng in Hungrye, 1164
For his defautis ageyn the kyng of France
Icallid Charlis, of malis & folie,
Be indignacioun, this* was his tormentrie:
His eyen put out, — ther was no bet socour — 1168
And aftir slayn be doom of themperour.

[How Diogenes the emperour was take and eiene
put out.]²

Ernest, Duke
of Swabia, who
opposed the
Emperor Henry,
was banished
to dwell with
savage beasts
in a forest,
where he was
slain.

¶ Afftir to Bochas ther cam tweyne on þe ryng,
Duk of Sweue, Hermest, as I reede,
Geyn* themperour first maliciousli werki[n]g, 1172
Herry themperour regnyng tho in deede.
But for his malis, this was his fatal meede:
Banshed to duelle among beestis most sauage,
Slayn in a forest for his gret outrage. 1176

After Constant-
tine of
Grece died,
Diogenes, a
knight, suc-
ceeded him in
Constantinople,

¶ Whan Constantyn departed from this lyff,
Which of al Grece was lord and gouernour,
Be mariage of hire that was his wiff,
A kniht Diogenes was maad emperour; 1180
Fortune to hym dide so gret fauour,

1152. Zerta] Herta J, Geysa P. 1159. make] made H.

1164. Petre H. 1167. this] that B, J.

1171. Sueuie P — earnest P.

1172. Geyn] Ageyn B, J, R 3, P. 1173. Henry P.

1175. among] mong R 3 — most] om. J, P.

¹ MS. J. leaf 172 verso.

² MS. J. leaf 172 verso.

Constantynople holdyng in his hond,
 As souereyn prince of al Grekis lond.
 Yet ther wer* summe that gruchched þerageyn 1184 although some
 And hadde of hym gret indignacioun. men grumbled,
 The kyng of Perse, Belset Tarquemayn, among them
 From hym be force took many a regioun; Belsech Turco-
 Mesopotanye to his pecessioun 1188 man, who took
 Took be strong hand, thoruh his cheualrie, Mesopotamia
 Maugre Diogenes, & al-most al Surrie. and nearly all
 Syria away
 from him.

Belset Tarquemayn made hymself so strong,
 Bi manli force Diogenes tassaile; 1192 Diogenes con-
 And for Diogenes thouhte he did hym wrong, sidered him-
 He gan ordeyne gret stuff & apparaile; wronged and
 met Belsech
 A day assigned, thei mette in bataile,— in battle, but
 Diogenes of froward auenture 1196 was defeated

He and his knihtis brouht to disconfiture.
 Take he was and brouht be gret disdeyn,
 In whom as tho ther was no resistence,
 To kyng Belset callid Tarquemayn. 1200 and brought
 And whan he cam onto his presence, before his
 Ageyn[e]s hym was youe this sentence: conqueror,
 To lyn down plat, and the kyng Belsette who after
 Sholde take his foot and on his throte it sette. 1204 compelling
 him to lie
 down on the
 ground, set
 his foot on
 his throat
 in despite.

This was doon for an hih[e] despiht,
 Diogenes brouht foorth on a cheyne,
 Withoute reuerence, fauour or respiht,
 At gret[e] feestis assigned was his peyne; 1208 Diogenes was
 And aldirlast put out his eye[n] tweyne. afterwards
 The wheel of Fortune tourneth as a ball; exhibited at
 Sodeyn clymbyng axeth a sodeyn fall. festivals and
 finally his eyes
 were put out.

[How Robert duk of Normandie fauht with turkes
 was named to the crowne of Ierusalem & died at
 mischef.]¹

A WORTHY prince spoke of in many rewm, 1212 Duke Robert
 Noble Robert, duk of Normandie, of Normandy
 Chose to the crowne of Iherusalem; was a worthy
 prince.

1184. wer] was B, H 5, P. 1186. Belset] belsate H, Belsech
 P— Tarquemayn] Tarquenyayne J, Tarquynyan H, Turco-
 mane P. 1191. Tarquynyan H, Tarquenyman J.
 1200. Belsech Tarcomene P— Tarquynyayn H.
 1204. throte] bak H, bake R 3.

¹ MS. J. leaf 173 recto.

- He refused the crown of Jerusalem, which lost him Fortune's favour.
- But for cause he dide it denye,
 Fortune ay hadde onto hym enuye. 1216
 The same Robert next in order was
 That cam to peyne his fall onto Bochas.
- Together with Godfrey de Beuillon he fought the Turks and Saracens,
- For Cristis feith this myhti champioun,
 This Duk Robert, armyd in plate & maile, 1220
 With manli Godfrey, Godfrey Bollioun,
 Ageyn[es] Turkis fauht a gret bataille,
 For Cristes feith that it sholde auaille
 To susteene his lawe in ther entent 1224
 To alle the kyngis of the occident.
- who sought to destroy Christ's faith, and with the aid of the kings of England, Normandy and France defeated them.
- Of Turkis, Sarsyns was so gret a noubre,
 Geyn Cristis lawe gadred a puissaunce,
 The feith of Crist falsli to encoumbre: 1228
 But ther wer maad[e] hasti ordenaunce
 Be kynges of Ingland, Normandie & Fraunce;
 First to socoure did his besi peyne
 Godfrey Bollioun, that was duk of Loreyne, 1232
- Robert was chosen king of Jerusalem;
- Which on Sarsyns made a disconfiture,
 Maugre Turkis, for al ther cruel myht.
 In which bataille Crist made hym to recure
 The feeld that day for to supporte his riht, 1236
 Wher said Robert was founde so good a kniht,
 That for his noblesse, be report of writyng,
 Of Iherusalem was namyd to be kyng.
- but he would not accept, because his older brother William had died in England and he was the next heir.
- Assentid nat onto the eleccioun, [p. 422] 1240
 Because of newe that he did vndirstonde
 His elder brothir, for short conclusioun,
 Icallid William was ded in Ingland;
 Knowyng hymself[e] next heir to that lond, 1244
 Forsook Iherusalem, and lik a manli kniht
 Cam to Ingland for to cleyme his riht.
- He went to England and found his younger brother Henry crowned king, who said he was rightful heir, Robert being king of Jerusalem.
- And yit or he cam he hadde kouleching,
 His yonger brothir, [that] callid [was] Herry, 1248
 Had take upon hym to be crownid kyng;
 Told his lordis and princis fynalli
 He was next heir; entrid rihtfulli
 As enheritour to succede in that rewme, 1252
 His brother beyng kyng of Iherusalem.

1229. ordenaunce] purveiaunce H. 1238. of] and R.

1240. onto] to R. 1247. And] om. H, R 3.

1248. yonger] yong R. 1249. upon] on H. 1252. As] an R

God wot the cas* stood al in oþer wise: The said[e] Duk Robert of Normandie Purposed hym be marcial emprise From his brother to take the regalie. Took his princis and his cheualrie; Thouhte he wolde, lik a manli kniht, Arryue in Ingland and reioysshe his riht.	1256	So Robert proposed to take the kingdom by force,
Bothe in o feeld assemblid on o day, The brethre tweyne, ech with strong partie To darreyne, and make no delay, Euerich with othir to holde chaumpartie. But whan the lordes this mischeef did espie, Thei besied hem and wer nat rek[e]les Atween the brethre to refourme pes.	1260 1264	and both sides met on the field of battle; but before the fight began, the lords inter- vened, and the brothers
The said[e] brethre wer fulli condescendid Vpon this poynt, for short conclusioun, As in thaccord was iustli comprehendid: Herry to holde and haue pcessioun Duryng his lyff of al this regioun, And Robert sholde haue for his partie A summe of gold with al Normandie.	1268 1272	agreed to let Henry keep his crown in England, Robert to have Normandy and £3000 a year.
Thre thousand pound, put in remembrance, Ech yeer to Robert sent fro this regioun, Of which[e] pay to make ful assuraunce Was leid hostages, as maad is mencion. But yit of newe fill a discencioun Atwixe the brethre, of hatreede & envie, For certeyn castellis that stood in Normandie,	1276 1280	But a new quarrel broke out about certain Norman castles,
Which castel[is] longed of heritage Vnto the kyngis iurediccioun, Of which the duk took his auantage, Maugre the kyng, & heeld pcessioun — Torned aftir to his confusioun. And whan the kyng did this thing* espie, With strong[e] hond cam into Normandie,	1284 1288	which belonged by inheritance to the king, and of which Robert took possession.
Wher the duk was leid a sieg aboute. Made ordenaunce to recure his riht; Gat the castel; took his brother oute;		Henry came to Normandy with a strong force, took his brother Robert

1254. cas] cause B, J, H 5. 1259. Thouhte] thouth H.

1261. 1st o] the H, a R, R 3, H 5 — 2nd o] a R, J, R 3, P.

1282. castell R.

1287. did this thing] this thing did B, J, P.

- and put him in prison, where he remained 14 years until he died. Emprisownd hym of verray force & myht; 1292
 Leftt hym allone out of mennys siht
 Fourteene yeer, the cronicle writ so;
 Ther he deide in myscheeff and in wo.
- While Bochas was busy with his book, the Emperor Henry IV. came to him to complain of his son's great unkindness; ¶ Whil Bochas was besi in his labour 1296
 His book tacomplissch with gret dilligence,
 To hym appereed the grete emperour
 Callid Herry, shewyng his presence;
 Gan compleyne of the grete offence 1300
 Doon to hym, the myscheeff and distresse,
 Bi his sonys gret vnkyndenesse.
- for he bound his father in chains and let him die in prison. The which[e] sone was callid eck Herry,
 Gretli accusid of ingratitude, 1304
 Cause he wrouhte so disnaturalli:
 Took his fadir with force & multitude,
 Bounde and cheynid, shortli to conclud; 1308
 And aftirward, ther geyned no raunsoun,
 At gret myscheef deied in prisoun.
- [How Iocelyne prince of Rage for pride slouthe & lecherie died in pouert.]¹
- Next in order came Josselyn, with sad and dead visage. He was prince of Rages, a famous city, but gave himself to lechery and idleness and neglected his realm and lost his reputation to such a degree. N EXT in ordre, with trist & ded visage,
 Vnto Bochas to shewe his heuynesse 1312
 Cam Iocelyn, lord & prince of Rage,
 Which is a cite famous of richesse.
 And this prince, myn auctour berth witnessse,
 Was gretly youe to slouthe & slogardie, 1316
 And al his lust he sette in lecherie.
- Leftt his lordship out of gouernaunce,
 For lak of wisdam & discrecioun;
 In flesschli lust[es] set al his plesaunce;
 And to the contres aboute hym enviroun 1320
 He was nat had in reputacioun:
 Certeyn princis, myn auctour doth descryue,
 Of his lordship cast hym to depryue.
- that several kings laid siege to his city and, Amongis which the prince of Alapie, [p. 423] 1324
 Callid Sangwyn, the stori who list see,
 To Iosalyn hauyng gret envie,

1292. Enprisownd R. 1293. of] of his R.
 1299. shewyng] shewid H. 1309. At] A R.
 1319. lustes] lust J, P. 1325. Sagnine P.

Leide a sieg to Rages his* cite,
 He beyng absent ferr fro that contre. 1328
 And thus for slouthe & wilful negligence,
 Rages was take be myhti violence.

And Iosalyn comaundid to prisoun;
 To hym Fortune was so contrarious: 1332
 Lost his lordship and domynacioun.
 Loo, heer the fyn of folkis vicious;
 Slouh, delicat, proud and lecherous,
 Deide in pouert, in myscheef & in neede; 1336
 Of vicious princis, loo, heer the fynal meede!

capturing him,
 put him in
 prison, where
 he died. Such
 is the final
 reward of
 proud and
 vicious princes.

[How the Emperour Andronicus slouh all that were
 of the blood Roial cherysshed vicious peple and
 aftir was honget.]¹

A S verray heir and trewe successour
 Bi eleccioun and also bi lynage,
 Cam Andronicus, as lord & emperour, 1340
 Constantynople, crownid yong of age,
 Next to Bochas, with trist & pale visage,
 Besechyng hym to doon his besi cure
 To remembre his woful auenture. 1344

Andronicus I.,
 who was the
 rightful
 emperor in
 Constanti-
 nople, came to
 Bochas and
 besought
 him to
 remember
 his story.

Among Grekis, be stori and scripture,
 This Andronicus gouernid nat ariht;
 Ageyn[es] lawe & eek ageyn nature,
 Founde with his sustir flessfli on a niht; 1348
 Bothe of assent[e] took hem to the fliht,
 Ageyn[es] hym his cosyn was so fell,
 Lord of that contre callid Emanvell.

He did not
 rule justly and,
 discovered one
 night with his
 sister, fled for
 fear of his
 cousin
 Manuel.

For a tyme stood as a man exilid 1352
 For his discenciouns and many vnkouth stryff;
 Bi his princis afftir reconciled,
 Stondyng in hope he sholde amende his lyff.
 But in the tyme that he was fugitiff, 1356
 He was maad lord, & stood so for a while
 Regnyng in Pontus, of Asie a gret ile.

For a time he
 was an exile,
 but afterwards
 his princes,
 hoping he
 would amend
 his life, became
 reconciled to
 him, and he
 reigned in
 Pontus.

In this while Emanuel was ded,
 Fall in gret age, the stori tellith thus, 1360

1327. his] the B, J. 1331. to] vnto R.
 1341. crownid] crownyng R. 1347. eek] om. H.
 1349. took] to R. 1352. 2nd a] om. R. 1355. his] om. H.
 MS. J. leaf 173d.

- Manuel died and left a son called Alexius, who had a tutor of the same name. Haung a child, & he, who list take heed,
Whil he duelled in his fadris hous
Among Grekis callid Alexivs;
And the tutour he was assigned too
Icallid was Alexivs also. 1364
- This tutor took all the power in Constantinople to himself; The same that was assigned his tutour,
Took upon hym al the gouernaunce
And ful poweer as lord & emperour,
Hadde al thempire vndir his obeissaunce;
Princis, lordis gaff to hym attendaunce;
Wher that he was present or absent,
Ech thyng was doon at his comaundement. 1368
- but he was a tyrant, and his subjects decided to call Andronicus back to the imperial throne. I meene as thus: he had al in his hond
Constantynople, cite of gret substaunce;
But for extorsiouns which he did in the lond
On his sogettis, and for mys gouernaunce,
Among the lordis it fill in remembraunce,
Alle of assent in hert[e] gan desire
Calle Andronicus ageyn to his empire. 1376
- No sooner was Andronicus in Constantinople than he slew all the royal blood except a prince called Isaac. Bassent restorid and crownid emperour,
Constantynople entryng the cite,
Besied hym be fraudulent labour
Al the blood born of the imperial see
For to be slayn, of vengable cruelte,
Be iugement of this Andronicus,
Except a prince callid Isacivs. 1380
- He was as evil and revengful in old age as in his youth, and Thus in effect the trouthe was weel seene,
He was vengable last in his old age,
Riht as he was in his yeeris greene,
Felli gouerned, ful off fals outrage,
Last of alle, malicious of corage.
Took to counsail, in Grece he was thus namyd,
Al suich as wern disclaundrid or diffamyd. 1388
- associated with defamed men, homicides and ribalds, sparing no woman Homycides he hadde in his housholde,
Tirauntis that wrouhte ageyn[es] rihtwisnesse;
Cherished all that hardi wern and bolde
Widwes, wyues & maidenés to oppresse;*
Ribaudie was callid gentillesse;
Spared nouter, he was so lecherous,
Women sworn chast nor folk religious. 1396

- Hadde also no maner conscience
 To pile his sogettis falsli be rauyne;
 Took what hym list be iniust violence;
 To alle vices his youthe he did enclyne. 1404
 And alle that wer[e]n of the roial lyne
 Wer slayn echon, except Isacivs,
 As I told erst[e], bi Andronicvs.
- As I fynde, for hym in haste he sente, [p. 424] 1408
 For this purpos to come to his presence,
 To moord[e]ren hym, this was his entente;
 Be dyuers toknes and many euidence,
 And fully knew the fyn of his sentence, 1412
 He lik a prince list [to] come no neer;
 Smet of the hed[e] of the massageer.
- And afftir that, of manli prouidence,
 Mid the cite shewed hym lik a kniht; 1416
 Praied lordis to yiue hym audience,
 Princis, iuges for to doon hym riht,
 That he myht declaren in ther siht
 Gret iniuries, damages outrageous 1420
 Wrouht bi themperour callid Andronicus.
- “O citeseyens, that knowen al the guise
 Of your emperour callid Andronicus;
 Nat emperour, so ye list aduertise, 1424
 But a tiraunt cruel & furious,
 A fals moordrer, vengable, despitous,
 Hath of newe, of* frowar[d] fals corage
 Slayn of thempire hooli the lynage. 1428
- Ther is alyue left non of the blood
 Sauf I allone of the roial lyne;
 For Andronicus lik a tiraunt wood
 Hath slay[e]n echon, breefli to termyne; 1432
 His suerd of vengauce thei myhte nat declyne.
 Now purposeth of mortal tirannye,
 Slen me also that am of ther allie.
- Requeryng you in this consistorie, 1436
 O citeseyne[s] that heer present bee,
 To remembre and calle to memorie
 How this famous imperial cite
 Hath ay be redi to doon equite, 1440

and pillaging
 his subjects
 by unjust
 violence.

He sent for
 Isaac with the
 intention of
 murdering
 him; but
 Isaac smote
 off the head
 of the
 messenger

and prayed the
 lords and
 princes of the
 city to do him
 justice, saying,

“O citizens,
 you know that
 the cruel
 tyrant
 Andronicus
 has slain all
 the royal
 blood

except
 me alone,
 whom he now
 purposes to
 destroy.

“I beg you
 to remember
 that this city
 has always
 been
 ready to do
 justice and

1405. And] To R. 1413. to] om. R — neer] were R.
 1427. of] and B, R, P, & H 5. 1435. ther] bis H.

repress the
wrong of
tyrants.

Besi also of ther hih noblesse
Wrong of tirauntes manli to repressse.

"Philosophers
and poets say
that the blood
of tyrants is a
noble sacrifice,
and, since you
are just, weigh
this matter
in balance."

Philisophres and poetis eek deuisse,
In ther sawes prudent and notable, 1444

Blood of tirauntis is noble sacrefise
To God aboue*, whan thei be vengable.
And sith ye bee rihtful, iust & stable,
In your werkis void of variaunce, 1448
Weieth this mateer iustli in ballaunce."

The people
agreed to put
down Andronicus
and set up
Isaac.
The tyrant
betook himself
to a fortress.

The people echon, alle of oon assent,
For outrages of this Andronicus
Put hym down be rihtful iugement, 1452

In whos place set up Isacius.
The said tiraunt, froward & furious,
Gan maligne and hysiluen dresse
In his diffence to take a forteresse. 1456

but was
captured,
stripped of his
garments, one
of his eyes
rent out, and

It halpe hym nat to make resistance,
So as he stood[e] void of al fauour;
Segid he was, and be violence,*
Maugre his myht[e], rent out of that tour; 1460
Spoiled cruelli; fond no bet socour,
Stood al nakid, quakyng in his peyne;
And first rent out oon of his eien tweyne.

compelled to
ride backwards
on an ass,
holding fast
to his tail, to
the delight of
all the people.

And ouermor he hadde this reward, 1464
Withoutyn help[e], socour or respiht,
Rood on an asse, his face set bakward,
The assis tail holdyng for despiht.
Whom to beholde the people hath deliht; 1468
To poore and riche thoruhout the cite
Hym to rebuke was grantid liberte.

After that, he
was taken out
of the city
in a cart and
hanged amidst
a terrible
clamour until
he died.

Afttir al this, in a carte sette
And vengabli lad out off the toun, 1472

Be doom Ihangid on an hih givet.
The people on hym, to his confusioun,
Made [a] clamour and terrible soun,
Wolde neuer fro the galwes weende 1476
Til in myscheeff bi deth he made an eende.

1445. noble] notable H, R 3. 1446. aboff B.

1459. violence] benivolence B.

1467. for] so of H.

1472. vengabli] vengable R.

1475. a] om. R, J, H 5 — and] and a H, R 3, P.

Lenvoye.

- I**N this tragedie, ageyn Andronicus
 Bochas maketh an exclamacioun,
 And ageyn alle princis vicious, 1480
 Whil thei haue poweer and domynacioun
 Be tyrannye vse extorsioun,
 Concludyng thus:* that ther fals lyuyng
 Of riht requereth to haue an euel eendyng. 1484
- Indifferentli this tiraunt lecherous
 Of wyues, maidenens maad non exceptioun,
 Folwyng his lust, froward & disclaunderous,
 Spared no womman of religioun. 1488
 Made widwes breke ther professioun
 Be violence; peise weel al this thyng,
 Of riht requereth to haue an euel eending.
- Most in [m]ordre he was contagious, [p. 425] 1492
 Of innocent blood to make effusioun;
 Vengable also ageyn al vertuous;
 Ageyn his kynreede souhte occasioun
 To slen the lyne fro which that he cam doun. 1496
 Which considered, al suich fals werkynge
 Of riht requereth to haue an euel eending.
- Bochas manaceth princis outraious,
 Which be ther proud hatful ambicioun, 1500
 To God & man of wil contrarious,
 Hauyng in herte a fals oppynyoun,
 Al tho that been in ther subieccioun
 Thei may deuoure, ther power so stretchyng, 1504
 Which shal nat faille to haue an euel eendyng.
- Noble princis, ye that be desirous
 To perseuere in your domynacioun,
 And in al vertu to been victorious, 1508
 Cherisheth trouthe, put falsnesse doun,
 Beth merciabe, mesurid be resoun,
 Of Andronicus the surfetes eschewyng,*
 That ye bi grace may haue a good eending. 1512

Bochas
 exclaims
 against
 all tyrannous,
 vicious princes,
 and says that
 justice requires
 them to have
 an evil end.

This lecherous
 tyrant made
 no exception
 of wives and
 maidens, and
 even oppressed
 widows and
 nuns.

He shed
 innocent blood
 and hated all
 virtuous men.

Bochas
 threatens such
 outrageous
 princes, proud
 and contrary
 to God, who
 think they can
 devour all men
 who are subject
 to them.

Noble Princes,
 if you wish
 to keep your
 crowns, cherish
 truth, put
 down falseness
 and be
 merciful.

1480. And] *om.* R. 1483. thus] this B.

1489. widwes] widwes maidenys H, wyfes J.

1492. contagious] contrarious H, R 3. 1496. that] *om.* H.

1509. falsnesse] falsshede J, P.

1511. eschewyng] shewyng B, R, H 5.

[Off Isacyus made blynde & taken at mischeff.]¹

Isaac then
became
emperor,
but a brother
of Andronicus
clapped a red-
hot basin to
his face and
blinded him.

AS is rehersed, whan Isacivs
Had al thempire in pecessioun,
Tauenge the deth[e] of Andronicus,
Constantynople, in that roial toun, 1516
A brother of his be force ther cam down
With a bacyn, brennyng briht as gleede,
Made hym blynde; of hym no mor I reede, —

He lay await
for Isaac like
a thief and,
seizing him,
put him in
prison.

Except Isacivs was taken at myscheeff 1520
Of hym that wrouhte to his destruccioun;
Liggyng await as doth a preue theeff,
Took themperour, put hym in prisoun,
Vengabli dide execusioun, 1524
As is remembrid, with a bacyn briht,
Brennyng red hot; and so he loste his siht.

Isaac's son
Alexius
expected
to succede,
but he was
murdered by
his tutor.

A sone he hadde callid Alexivs,
Tendre of age, cast hym to succede. 1528
Bi his tutour, fals and contrarious,
Moordred he was at myscheef, as I reede;
The same tutour purposyng in deede
Of thempire, be fals collusioun, 1532
Be fraude & meede to haue pecessioun.

Savagetus,
sultan of
Egypt, then
came in haste
together with
two mighty
sultans of
Damascus,
piteously
weeping.

In this chapitle of hym no mor I fynde
Rehersed heer in ordre be writyng;
But to myn auctour, be processe maketh mynde, 1536
[¶] Ther cam in hast Sangot of Egipt kyng,
And with hym cam pitousli weepyng
Mihti princis, soudanys [bothe] tweyne,
Regnyng in Damas, ther fallis to compleyne. 1540

The one was
Salethus and
the other
Cathabadinus.

Of Allapie Salech was the ton,
Regnyng in Damas of his deu[e] riht;
Cathabadyn ther beyng eek soudon,
Which in tho daies was holde a mauli kniht 1544
And riht notable in eueri mannys siht.
And for the soudon of Babilon a-ferre
Callid Saladyn oppressid was with werre,

1513. whan] than H. 1530. at myscheff he was H.
1537. of Egipt Sangot in hast H — Sangor R, Sauagetus P
(om. in hast). 1540. Damas] Sirie P.
1541. Of] Of al H, R — Alopie J, Aloppe P.
1543. Cathabaden P — ther] the R. 1546. a-ferre] of ferr R.

¹ MS. J. leaf 174 verso.

- For socour sente to thes princis tweyne, 1548
 To come in haste with al ther cheualrie
 Hym to supporte, and doon ther besi peyne
 Enforce ther miht to susteene his partie.
 Whos request thei list nat [to] denye; 1552
 Abood no lenger, but made hemsiluen strong
 To stonde with hym, wher it wer riht or wrong.
- Of this mateer the substaunce to conclude,
 Thes princis cam, Salech & Cadabadyn; 1556
 For ther gverdoun thei fond ingratitude
 In this forseid soudon Saladyn;
 Founde hym vnkynde; pleykli this þe fyn,
 From ther estat, as it was aftir knowe, 1560
 Disgraded hem, brouht hem doun ful lowe.
- Of hym in soth thei hadde non oþer meede
 For ther labour nor for ther kyndenesse.
 What fill aftir, in Bochas I nat reede; 1564
 For he foorthwith leueth this processe,
 [¶] And vnto Robert doth his stile dresse,
 Callid Ferentyn regnyng in Tarence,
 Loste his lordshep be sodeyn violence: 1568
- This to seyne, he regned but a while;
 This saide Robert loste his gouernaunce.
 ¶ Next to Bochas cam Guilliam of Cicile,
 Kyng of that contre, a lord of gret puissaunce; 1572
 Loste his kyngdam thoruh Fortunis variaunce,
 His eyen tweyne rent out of his hed;
 Aftir deide in myscheef & in dreed.
- Which Guylliam regnyng in Cecile [p. 426] 1576
 Was be discent[e] born nih of allie
 To Robert Guiscart, as bookis do compile,
 That whilom was duk of Normandie,
 Which of his manhoode & gret policye,* 1580
 With his brothir, ful notable of renoun,
 Brouhte al Naples to ther subieccioun.
- His brother name callid was Roggeer,
 Which hadde a sone to been enheritour, 1584
 Callid Tancret, as seith the cronicleer;

Saladin, sultan of Babylon, sent to them for aid in his wars,

but rewarded them with ingratitude and put them from their estate,

and that is all Bochas says about them. Robert Surrentine, who reigned in Tarentum, lost his kingdom by violence;

and William of Sicily, who next appeared to Bochas, died in mischief and dread after his eyes had been put out.

He was a near relative of Robert Guiscard, once Duke of Normandy, who, together with his brother Roger, conquered Naples.

1552. to] om. J, P, R 3.

1561. Disgratid R.

R 3, H 5, Surrentine P.

B, R, J, H 5. Supplied from H, which agrees with R 3.

1556. Cathebadyn P.

1567. Forentyne R, Forentyn H,

1580] Gretli delityng in cheualrie

- Roger had a son called Tancred, who reigned in Sicily.
- Which took on hym to regne as successour.
Thus in Cecile Tancret was *gouvernour*,
Ageyn[e]s whom, be title souht a-ferre 1588
Of alliance began a mortal werre
- against whom a war was begun for the sake of Constance, Roger's daughter, who wanted to become a nun.
- For a maide that callid was *Constance*,
That douhtir was to this duk* Rogeer,
Which was set of spiritual plesauce 1592
To be religious, of hool hert & enteer.
And be record off the cronicleer,
This *Constance* hath the world forsake
And to religioun hath hir bodi take. 1596
- It had been foretold that her marriage would cause the desolation of the kingdom.
- Of this *Constance*, the silue same yeer
That she was born, as maad is *mencioun*,
Ther was a clerk, a gret astronomeer,
Tolde of hir birthe be calculacioun, 1600
She sholde cause the desolacioun
Of that kyngdam bi processe of hir age,
Bi the occasioun oonli of mariage.
- Enemies of Tancred moved Emperor Henry to take Constance out of her convent; and with the dispensation of the pope she was married, and Tancred put from his right.
- Summe that wern to Tancret gret enmy, 1604
Be ther vngoodli excitacioun
Meued themperour that callid was Herry
To take *Constance* from hir religioun.
And bi the popis dispensacioun 1608
She weddid was; themperour bi his myht
Bi title of hire put Tancret from his riht.
- For a long time however he withstood the emperor, but finally died of the pest,
- With a gret *noumbre* of Italiens
Themperour entrid into that regioun; 1612
But be fauour off Siciliens,
Tancret long tyme stood in pecessioun:
But thoruh Fortunys *transmutacioun*,
The same tyme, to conclud in sentence, 1616
The saide Tancret deide of pestilence.
- and his young son William then resolved to defend the country.
- His sone Guilliam, that was but yong *in deede*,
With Siciliens cast hym nat to faille
To keepe his lond and his riht posseede; 1620
Meete themperour with statli apparaille,
Made hym reedi with hym to haue bataile.
But themperour to gretter auantage
Caste otherwise of fraude in his corage. 1624

1588. whom] hom R. 1591. this duk] the kyng B, J, P.
1593. &] om. R. 1594. cronyculer R. 1602. hir] his R, H.
1603. the] of H. 1604. that] tyme R. 1612. into] in R.
1617. pestilence] sentence R. 1622. haue] om. H.

- Feynyngli duryng this discord,
 Temperour caste another wile,
 Bi a fals colour to fallen at accord,
 And yonge Guilliam vngoodly to beguyle; 1628
 Vnder trete taken in Cecile,
 Falsli de pryued off his regioun,
 Sent to Itaille and throwe in prisoun,
 Be weie of trete, the stori who list see; 1632
 Al concluded vndir fals tresoun.
 With Guilliam take wer his sustres thre,
 He perpetueli dampned to prisoun,* 1636
 His eien put out for mor confusioun,
 Deied in pouert, lost his enheritaunce:
 Loo, heer the fyn of worldly varyaunce!
- Ferther to write as Ihon Bochas began,
 Aftir that Guilliam was put from his rewme, 1640
 ¶ To hym appeered Guyot Lycynyan,
 Chose afforn kyng of Iherusalem,—
 Whos knihtli fame shon like the sonne-bem,—
 Which bi his noblesse he whilom did atteyne, 1644
 Godfrey present, that was duk of Loreyne.
- But bi the soudon namyd Saladyne
 He was enchacid out of that dignite—
 Al worldli pompe draweth to declyn!— 1648
 So for the constreynt of his aduersite,
 The yeeris passid of his prosperite,
 Went into Cipre as a fugityff;
 What fill afftir, I reede nat in his lyff. 1652
- ¶ To make his compleynt afftir hym cam oon
 Which hadde stonde in gret perplexite,
 Erl of Bryenne, & was callid Ihon,
 Which aftirward was kyng of the cite 1656
 Callid Iherusalem, and [had] also parde
 A fair[e] douhtir, yong & tendre of age,
 Ioyned aftir to Frederik in mariage.
- Be yng that tyme lord and emperour, [p. 427] 1660
 Was desirous aboff al othir thyng
 Of Iherusalem to be gouernour

But the emperour, under colour of a treaty, deprived him of his kingdom and threw him into prison,

where his eyes were put out and he died.

After William, Guy de Lusignan, king of Jerusalem, appeared, a knightly man,

whom Saladin chased out of his realm; and he became a fugitive in Cyprus. I do not know what happened afterwards.

John, Earl of Brienne and king of Jerusalem, had a fair daughter who married Emperor Frederick II.,

but John, instead of keeping his kingdom of Jerusalem

1626. caste] cast all H, R 3, P.

1634. sustren R. 1635, 36 are transposed in B, R, J, H 5, P.

1641. Guido Lusignan P.

1651, 52 are transposed in H, but correction indicated.

and becoming king of Sicily, as he desired, was made a captain of mercenaries in Lombardy.

And of Cecile to be crownid kyng;
Which aldirlast, for his sotil werkyng 1664
Constreyned was, doun fro that partie,
To be a capteyn for soud in Lumbardie.

[Off Herry the eldest sone of Frederyk the secounde myscheued by his Fadir.]¹

Henry, eldest son of the Emperor Frederick II., lame and ill, thin and pale from imprisonment, came complaining to Bochas.

NEXT to Bochas, crokid, halt & sik,
Oon callid Herry cam for to compleyne, 1668
The eldest sone onto Frederik,
Which bi seeknesse hadde felt gret peyne,
Mègre and pale, contract in eueri veyne,
Of whos langour the cheef occasioun 1672
Was that he lay so long tyme in prisoun.

His adversity was caused by his father's perverse cruelty.

Al his disese and gret aduersite
Icausid was, for short conclusioun,
Bi his fadris froward cruelte, 1676
As Bochas aftir maketh menciou. n.
And this Herry bi generacioun
Sone to Frederik, lik as it is founde, —
I meene Frederik callid the secounde. 1680

First king of Sicily and of Jerusalem, his renown shone.

This saide Herry be discent of lyne
Of Cicile first was crownid kyng,
And of Iherusalem, whos renoun dide shyne
Thoruh many a lond[e] at his begynnyng; 1684
And Fortune also in hir werkyng
Was to this Herry, passyngli notable
In al his werkis, inly faourable.

He was affable and constant and popular among the people; but

Off his persone had this auantage: 1688
To al the people he was riht acceptable,
Weel comendid in his flouryng age,
Of cheer and face and look riht amiable,
And of his port verray demuer & stable, 1692
Callid in his gynnyng, such faour he hath wonne,
Of princis alle verray liht & sonne.

it often happens that a cloudy day follows a bright morning,

But ofte it fallith, that a glad morwenyng,
Whan Phebus sheweth his bemys cleer & briht, 1696
The day sumtyme, therupon folwyng,

1666. To be] been H. 1681. This] The H.
1687. inly] & inly H, R. 1690. his] this R.
1695. mornyng H, J, morning P.

¹ MS. J. leaf 175 b.

- With sum dirk skie is clipsid of his liht;
 And semblabli, thoruh Fortunys myht
 This saide prince, bi hir fals variaunce 1700
 Fond in hir wheel ful noious fell greuaunce.
- Who may the furies of Fortune appese,
 Hir troubli wawes to make hem calm & pleyn;
 Wher men most truste thei fynde most dise, 1704
 Wher double corages stonde in noun certeyn.
 A shynyng day is ofte meynt with reyn:
 Thus of Frederik the grete vnstabilnesse
 Hath brouht his sone in myscheef & distresse. 1708
- This Frederik set up in gret fauour
 Be the popis dilligent bisynesse,
 Vnto thestat lefft up of emperour;
 But thoruh his hatful froward vnkyndenesse, 1712
 Of couetise fill into suich* excesse,
 Took upon hym patrymonye to guie,
 Of Cristes cherech that part to occupie.
- Fill in the popis indignacioun,
 Counsail nor trete myhte not* auaile,
 But of malis and [fals] presumpcioun
 Caste with the pope to haue a gret bataile.
 The saide Herry his fadir gan counsaille, 1720
 Ageyn the cherech to do no violence
 But hym submytte *with* humble obedience.
- This striff enduryng atween thes gret estatis,
 Frederik made his sone be accusid 1724
 To hym of crym, *Illese Magestatis*,
 Wolde nat suffre he sholde been excusid;
 But lik a man maliciousli refusid,
 Be his fadris cursid fals tresoun 1728
 He was comaundid to deien in prisoun.
- Summe bookis sey[e]n he was take & brouht
 To his fadir of doom to ha[ue] sentence,
 But lik a man passid sorwe & thouht, 1732
 Which to his lyff hadde non aduertence,
 Furiousli and *with* gret violence,

and no one can allay the troubled waves of Fortune. The great inconstancy of Frederick brought him to distress.

Frederick, made emperor by the pope, became so covetous that he took upon himself the management of the church's patrimony, and

thereby incurring the pope's enmity, determined to make war on him. Herry advised his father to do no violence to the church,

and for this advice Frederick accused him of *lèse majesté* and threw him into prison.

Some books say that when he was brought in sorrow to his father for judgment, his horse fell down and he broke his neck.

1700. prince] princesse H.

1704. most truste] trust most R.

1713. into suich] in suich in B. 1715. part to] party forto R.

1717. not] noz B, noon J, R 3, none P.

1720. The] And the R.

1725. Lesæ Maiestatis P.

As he was lad, alas, on hors[e]bak,
His hors fill down & so his nekke he brak. 1736

Other books
rehearse that
he died in
prison after
long confine-
ment,
and that he
tumbled off a
bridge and
was drowned.

Summe bookis rehearse of hym & seyn,
His fadir took geyn hym occasioun;
And whan he hadde longe in cheynis leyn,
At gret myscheeff he deied in prisoun. 1740
And summe sey[e]n [how] that he fill doun
Of a bregge, Bochas reherseth heer,
And drownid was in a deep ryuceer.

¶ Bochas makith a comendacion of trewe love
a-tween kynrede.¹ [p. 428]

Bochas
commends all
such as are
naturally
disposed to be
upright to
their kindred.

NEXT in ordre myn auctour did his cure 1744
To make a special comendacio[u]n
Of swich as been disposid be nature
An[d] bi ther kyndli inclynacioun,
As blood requereth and generacioun, 1748
Taquite hymself in thouht, in will, in deede,
Witbout feynyng onto ther kynrede.

Especially when
no unkindness
is found in
them, in spite
of adversity,
and when they
are merciful
and sincere.

Specialli that non vnkynd[e]nesse
Be founde in them for non aduersite; 1752
To considre, of naturel gentillesse
To them approprid is merci & pite;
And tauoide the fals duplicite
That was in Frederik, which so vnkynd[e]li 1756
Leet slen his sone that callid was Herry.

Pity is a
natural trait,
and parents
are bound by
law, nature
and reason to
foster their
children and

Pite is approprid to kynrede,
Fader and mooder be disposicioun 1760
To cherissh the childre & [eke] feede
Til seuene yeer passe, lawe maketh mencion,
As thei are bounde of nature and* resoun.
That tyme passid, ther tendirnesse tenclyne
Vnto fourtene* to* vertuous disciplyne. 1764

1736. he] *om.* R. 1741. how] *om.* J — that] be H.
1749. in thouht in will] in will in thouht H, in wil thouht R 3
— 2nd and 3rd in] *om.* J — 3rd in] & R 3 — in thought,
wil, & dede P.
1760. eke] *om.* H, R, R 3.
1762. As] And as J, P — nature and] naturel B, natural J.
1764. fourtene] Fortune B, J — to] be B, bi R, R 3, J, by P.

¹ The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 175 verso: "A comendacion of Bochas of suche as be kynde to their kynrede."

- Than afftirward in ther adolescence,
Vertuousli to teche hem & chastise,
Norissh hem in doctryne & science,
Fostre in vertu vices to despise,
To be curteis, sad, prudent & wise;
For whan thei gynne with vertu in that age,
Gladli aftir, thei do non outrage.
- As it longeth to euery gentil lyne,
And blood roial, be kyndli influence,
To fader, mooder shewe hymself benigne,
Of humble herte don hem reuerence,
Ay to remembre in ther aduertence
On sexe princis wrouhte the contrarie,
For which Fortune was ther aduersarie.
- Euerich to other founde was vnkynde;
In cursid blood may be no kyndenesse;
Of oon tarage sauoureth tre & rynde,
The frut also bert[h] of the tre wisse;
And semblabli the fadris cursidnesse,
With mortal suerd, in nature repreuable,
Ageyn the child is ofte seyn vengable.
- ¶ Among[es] which Brutus is reknid oon,
Next in ordre folweth Manlius,
Slouh ther childre be record euerichon;
Phelipp Manlius & also Cassius,
And cruel Heroude, fell and malicious;
Frederik also most vengabli
Slouh his sone that callid was Herry.
- This Frederik beyng ay contrarye
Toward his sone, nat gracious nor benigne,
From hooli cherche vngoodli he gan varie
And therageyn[es] frowardli maligne;
And lik a man obstynat & vndigne
Deied a-cursid thoruh mysgouernaunce,
Withoute confessioun outhere repentaunce.
- to teach them
virtue dur-
ing their
adolescence.
- 1768
- 1772 Every gentle
line and all
royal blood
should shew
filial reverence;
but there were
six princes who
wrought the
contrary.
- 1776
- 1780 Each was cruel
to his children.
There may be
no kindness in
cursed blood.
- 1784
- 1788 These princes
were Brutus,
Manlius, Philip
Manlius,
Cassius,
Herod and
Frederick; and
- 1792
- 1796 this Frederick,
who was
neither
gracious
nor benign to
his son, and
who maligned
against
holy church,
died accursed,
without con-
fession or
repentance.

1768. Fostre] fostre hem H.

1772. H writes 1723 at beginning of this stanza but indicates correction with "vacat."

1779. was founde R. 1790. Herodes P.

[How Manfroy kyng of Poyle was slayn.]¹

Manfred, king of Naples, was put down and slain for his tyranny: what avails sceptre or sovranty to a tyrant?

¶ Nexe to Bochas of Poille *cam* þe kyng, 1800
 Began his fall and compleynt specefie,
 Callid Manfroy; and for his fals werking
 Put down & slayn, cause of his tirannye.
 Loo, what auailleth sceptre or regalie 1804
 To a tiraunt, which of violence
 List to Godward haue non aduertence!

[How Encys kyng of Sardany died in prisoun.]²

Enzio, king of Sardinia, was conquered by the people of Bologna and died in prison.

¶ With look[e] doun-cast, dedli pale of cheere,
 Of Sardania Encis next *cam* doun; 1808
 Kyng of that lond, to telle the maneere
 How he werreied ageyn the mihti toune
 Callid Bononia, to his confusioun;
 Be them venquished, & *with* cheynys rounde, 1812
 Deied in prisoun, so long he lay ther bounde.

[a water makith theves blynde & trewe men to see.]³

John Bochas says that in Sardinia there are no serpents and wolves, but that there is a well whose water makes thieves blind, and is a medicine to honest folk.

¶ Folwyng myn auctour callid Bochas Iohn,
 In Sardynia, as he maketh mynde,
 Serpent nor wolff in al that lond is* non, 1816
 Hauyng a welle, which of veray kynde
 Theuys eyen the watir maketh blynde;
 To trewe folk, as he doth diffyne,
 Water therof is helthe and medecyne. 1820

[An erbe who tastith it shal die lauhying.]⁴

There is also an herb that makes people laugh themselves to death if they taste of it; even to touch it is dangerous.

Ther groweth also an herbe, as bookis seie, [p. 429]
 Which that is so dyuers of nature,
 Who tasteth therof lauhhyng he shal deie,
 No medecyne may helpe hym* nor recure; 1824
 The touch therof stant eek in auenture, —

1800. Poille] Naples P.

1802. Maufron H, Manfrede P.

1808. Encius P. 1816. is] was B, H.

1819. folk] farlk R — diffyne] dyuynne J, devyne R 3, diuine P.

1824. hym] hem B.

¹ MS. J. leaf 176 recto.

³ MS. J. leaf 176 recto.

² MS. J. leaf 176 recto.

⁴ MS. J. leaf 176 recto.

Yiff it entre his mouth in any side,
He shal alyue for lauh tre nat abide.

[Another Frederyk was slayn bi Iugement of his
brothir.]¹

¶ Ther was anothir froward Frederik,
Sone to Alfonse, that was kyng of Castile,
Of corage wood and [also] fren[e]tik;
His owne brothir falsli to begile,
Began a werre lastyng but a while,
Whos purpos was his brother to deceyue
And the crowne of Castile to resceyue.

1828 Another
froward
Frederick, son
of Alphonse of
Castile, made
war on his
brother for the
sake of the
crown;

This Frederik cam with a gret bataile
Ageyn his brother for the same entent;
Off his purpos yit he dide faille:

1836 but neither
God nor
Fortune were
with him. He
was captured
and slain.

God nor Fortune wer nat of assent.
Take in the feeld[e] and be iugement
Of his brothir, for his gret trespace
Slay[e]n openli; gat no bettir grace.

1840

[How Manymettus and Argones died at mischef.]²

[¶] Manymettus, of Perce lord and kyng,
Cam next in pres, distressid *with* gret peyne,
Vpon Fortune pitousli pleynyng,
His aduersite did hym so constreyne;
For ther was oon which did at hym disdeyne
Callid Argoones, void of tite or lyne,
Geyn Manymet[tus] proudli gan maligne.

1844 Maumetus,
king of Persia,
came in great
distress, com-
plaining on
Fortune; for
Argones was
hostile to him
without cause.

Which Argones for his presumpcioun
Take at mischeef be sodeyn violence,
His doom was youe to deien in prision,
Of noun power to make resistance;
But Fortune, that can no difference
In hir* chaunges atwixen freend & foo,
Caused hem to deie at myscheef bothe two.

1852 However, for
his pre-
sumption
Argones was
captured and
sent to prison
to die there,
and Maumetus
also died at
mischief.

1830. also] *om.* R.

1842. Maumetus P. 1848. Maumetus P.

1853. difference] *diffence* R. 1854. hir] his B, H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 176 recto.

² MS. J. leaf 176 recto.

[How Charles kyng of Jerusalem and of Cecile for
Auaryce and avoutrie died at mischef.]¹

Noble Charles,
king of
Jerusalem and
Sicily, came
with such
good cheer and
knightly
manner to
Bochas,

AFFTIR thes forseid, rehersed *in sentence*, 1856
As Bochas procedeth* in his stile,
Kam noble Charlis unto his *presence*,
Kyng of Iherusalem and also of Cicile;
Of whos comyng myn auctour a gret while 1860
Astonid was, to seen his knihtli face
With so good cheere com into the* place.

that it seemed
as if he stood
high on
Fortune's
wheel, defying
her power.

For bi his port, who that beheeld hym weel,
Considred first his look & his visage, 1864
It sempte he trad upon Fortunys wheel,
And of his noble marcial corage
Hadde of hir poweer getyn auantage,
Shewyng hym-silf so fressh on ech partie, 1868
Hir and hir myht did vtirly diffye.

Of royal
lineage and
famous alliance,
he was brother
of St. Louis;

First to comende his roial hih lynage,
And of his vertuouus famous allyaunce,
As be wrytyng and preisyng with langage 1872
The name of hym speciali tauaunce,
Seith he was bor[e]n of the blood of Fraunce;
And to encrece mor souereynli his prys,
Writ he was brother onto Seynt Lowis. 1876

and I also
read that, as
Phoebus
outshines all
the other
spheres, so
does France
surpass all
other lands
both in peace
and war.

Gaff to France this comendacioun:
So as Phebus passeth ech othir sterre,
Riht so that kyngdam in comparisoun
Passeth eueri lond, bothe nih & ferre, 1880
In policie, be it of pes or werre;
For it transcendith, in pes be providence,
And in werre be knihtli excellence.

These
words were
not written by
Bochas, but by
one Laurence,
the translator of
this book, to
commend
France.

Thes woordis be nat take out of myn auctour,— 1884
Entitled heer for a remembraunce
Bi oon Laurence, which was a translatur
Of this processe, to comende Fraunce;
To preise that lond set al his plesaunce, 1888

1856. Afftir] Whan H, R 3 — in] was in H, R 3.

1857. procedeth] reherset H.

1862. com into the] komen into B, R. 1864. &] om. H.

1867. hir] his H. 1872. with] bi H, of J, P.

1877. this] his R. 1882. in pes be] bi pes of H.

1886. a] om. H. 1887. this] his R.

¹ MS. J. leaf 176 recto.

- Seith influence of that roial lond
 Made Charlis so worthi of his hond.
- Of whos noblesse Pope Vrban hadde ioie,
 Hym to encrece for vertuous luyng, 1892 Pope Urban
 Which that tyme was duk of Aungoie, also had joy
 Aftir chose of Cicile to be kyng. in Charles, and
 while he was
 Duke of Anjou
 asked him to
 come to Rome
- Of Pope Vrban requered be writyng,
 Toward Rome that he shold hym dresse 1896
 Of kyng Manfroy the tirannye toppresse.
- Ageyn the pope and hooli cherchis riht
 This same Manfroy dide gret extorsioun. and defend the
 Noble Charlis, as Goddis owne kniht, 1900 church against
 Cam with strong hond up to Roome toun; King Manfred.
 Which in his komyng gaf pecessioun Charles came
 with Guy de
 Montfort,
- To Guyot Maunfort for to haue the garde
 In his passage and gouerne the vaunwarde. 1904
- Toward Roome with gret ordenaunce [p. 430] leading many
 Thei passed ouer the boundis of Itaille; a strong
 This manly kniht, this Charlis born in France, company, and
 Ladde with hym many strong bataille found small
 The popis enmy manli for tassaille. 1908 resistance.
- But al this while, to stonden at diffence
 The said[e] Charlis fond no resistence.
- Entryng Roome to be ther protectour, 1912 Entering Rome
 Ful weel resceuyd at his first entryng, he was chosen
 Chose and preferrid for cheef senatour chief senator
 Bi the pope, most glad of his komyng; by the pope,
 and afterwards
 crowned king
 of Sicily and
 Jerusalem.
- Of Cicile was aftir crownid kyng, 1916
 And of Iherusalem, as maad is mencio[u]n,
 Graunted to hym fulli pecessioun.
- Which in his gynnyng bar hym tho so weel,
 Entryng that lond with knihtly apparaille, 1920 After taking
 Of Cassyne gat first the strong castel, Monte Cassino,
 he fought a
 great battle at
 Benevento,
- At Bonnevente hadde a gret bataille
 With kyng Manfroy, whos parti did[e] faille.
 To reherse shortli his auenture, 1924
 Charlis on hym made a disconfiture.

1899. same] saide H.

1903. Monforth R, Maufroite H, Manfort J (Guido of Mount-
 fort P).

1904. vawarde H, vawward P.

1906. ouer] wer H, R 3. 1910. stonden] stoden H.

1921. Cassile R. 1922. Beneuent P. 1925. made] had H.

- where Manfred was slain. He then put down a rebellion in Sicily and
- In which[c] bataile kyng Manfroy was slayn;
And noble Charlis took pocessioun,
Wherof Romeyns wer ful glad & fayn. 1928
Yit in Cicile ther was rebellioun,
But thei wer brouht onto subieccioun.
Than* Coradyn, record of old writing,
Sone of Conrade cleymed to be kyng. 1932
- at Talliazzo defeated and slew Conradin, son of Conrad IV., who claimed the throne.
- Gan make hym strong, proudli took his place
At Aligate, a famous old cite.
Noble Charlis with knihtli cheer & face
Fill upon hym, made hym for to flec. 1936
And to sette reste in the contre,
Tauoide trouble & make al thing certayn,
Gaff iugement Coradyn to be slayn.
- Charles then had entire possession of Sicily, and
- Among kinges notable and glorious, 1940
Charlis was put, as maad is menciou, n,
Lik a prince strong and victorious
In ful pesible and hool pocessioun
Of Cicile and al that regioun, 1944
Ageyn[e]s whom was non dissobeissaunce,
Yolde of hool herte to his gouernaunce.
- Fortune favoured him. His son married Mary, daughter of Stephen of Hungary;
- Be title also off his alliaunce,
Fortune gretli did hym magnefe; 1948
For as it is Iput in remembraunce,
The noble princesse that callid was Marye,
Douhtir to Steuene regnyng in Hungrye,
Ioynd was and knet in mariage 1952
To Charlis sone, tencres of his lynage.
- and by the authority of the pope Charles was made king of Jerusalem.
- The same Charlis be auctorite
Of the pope, so as hym list ordeyne,
Was eek maad kyng of the gret cite 1956
Callid Iherusalem, of touns most souereyne;
Be which[e] title he bar crownis tweyne.
- His brother Louis
- His brothir Lewis, olde bookis seye,
The same tyme in Egipt gan werreye. 1960
Gat al the contrees abouten envirooun,
Which that Sarsyns did falsli occupie;

1930. onto] to R.

1931. Than] Yit B, R, J, P, H 5 — Corandyne J, Conradine P.

1934. Agliate H, Talliatozzo P — an olde famous R, H, R 3, H 5.

1942, 43 are transposed in H, but correction indicated.

1945. no disbeissaunce R. 1950. princesse] processe R.

1951. Stephene P. 1952. knet] knet was R.

- Brouht hem ageyn[e] to subieccioun
Of Iherusalem, that lond to magnefe:
Cartage in Affrik, with al ther regalie,
And alle the contrees beyng afforn contrarye,
To kyng Charlis becam tributarye.
- 1964 conquered
the Saracen
countries about
Egypt, and all
became
tributary to
Charles.
- Thus* while he sat hiest in his glorie,
Lik Phebus shynyng in his mydday speere,
With many conquest and many gret victorie,
Whan his noblesse shon most briht & cleere,
The same tyme, with a frownyng cheere,
Fortune gan from Charlis turne hir face
And hym berafte his fauour and his grace.
- 1968 But when he
sat highest
in his glory,
Fortune turned
her face away
from him.
- 1972
- This lady Fortune doth* seelde in oon contune,
She is so gerissch of condicioun,
A sorceresse, a traitour in comune,
Caste a fals mene to his destruccioun,
Oon of his sonys slay[e]n with poison,
Which did eclipse, myn auctour doth expresse,
A ful gret part of [al] his old gladnesse.
- 1976 She is a
sorceress, a
traitress to
men, and
seldom
continues
in one.
A son of
Charles was
poisoned, and
- 1980
- He was disclaundrid of the grete* vice
Which apparteneth onto tirannye,
I meene the vice of froward auarice,
Which is contrarie gretli to cheualrie;
Diffamed also of fals auoutrie,
Which was susteened thoruh his meyntenance
Witbynne that lond[e] be a kniht of Fraunce.
- 1984 he himself
accused of
avarice and
defamed of
adultery
committed at
his court by
a French
knight
- 1988
- The same kniht abidyng in his hous,
Al Cicile troublid with that deede:
The grete offence was so disclaundrous,
Thoruh al the regioun that it began to spreede;
For thilke woman, pleynli as I reede,
Was wyff to oon which suffred this offence
And to be vengid dide his dilligence.
- [p. 43 I] 1992 with the wife
of John of
Procida,
who deter-
mined to be
revengeed,
- John Prosithe pleynli was his name,
Which cast hym fulli auengid for to be,
That kyng Charlis sholde ber the blame,
Sleñ al Frensh-men that bood in that contre,
Withoute grace, merci or pite.
- 1996 and that King
Charles might
bear the
blame, in-
stigated a
massacre of
all the French-
men in the
country.
- 2000

1965. ther] be H. 1968. Thus] This B, J.
1975. doth] did B. 1979. his] om. R. 1981. al] om. R.
1982. the grete] al the B, R, J, H 5. 1988. that] be H.
1993. thilke] thirk R — I] om. R. 1995. dide his] he did R.
1996. Procida P.

- The king of Aragon was called in, and
- And for to doon ful execucioun
Requered was the kyng of Arragoun.
- Charles lost Sicily and Jerusalem, and became so poor that he prayed for death.
- Loste of Cicile al hool the regioun
With the obeissaunce of many gret cite,* 2004
And of Iherusalem the pocessioun;
Fill be processe in gret aduersite,
And last, constreyned with greuous pouerte,
To God most meekli, with ful heuy cheere, 2008
Soone to be ded[e]; this was his praieere.
- He grew sick and languished until he fell into age and finally died. There is no more about him.
- Supprised he was with sorwe in his corage;
Loste his force; fill into malladie;
Languissed foorth til he gan falle in age, 2012
Ageyn Fortune fond no remedie.
And be thoccasioun of fals auoutrie
Fill to myscheff; and for sorwe & dreed
This Charlis deide; no mor of hym I reede. 2016

¶ Lenvoye.

- Just as Phoebus is often darkened after a bright morning, so it was with Charles. Men do not praise the fair day until eve.
- L YK as Phebus in sum fressh morwenyng
Aftir Aurora þe day doth clarefie,
Fallith ofte that his briht shynyng
Idirkid is with sum cloudi skie: 2020
A liknesse shewed in this tragedie,
Expert in Charlis, the stori doth weel preeue,
Youthe & age reknid ech partie,
The faire day men do preise at eue. 2024
- He was nearly related to St. Louis, wise, manly, virtuous and a flower of chivalry, until adultery came into his court.
- The noble fame of his fressh gynnyng, —
To Seyn[t] Lowis he was nih of allie, —
Riht wis, riht manli, riht vertuuous of lyuyng,
Callid of kniithod flour of cheualrie, 2028
Til meyntenauunce of auout[e]rie
Cam into his court to hurte his name & greue,
His lyff, his deth[e] put in iupartie:
The faire day men do preise at eue. 2032
- Lik desertis men haue ther guerdonyng:
Vertuuous lyff doth princis magnefie;
The contrarie to them is gret hyndryng, —

2003. the] that R. 2004. cite] contre B.

2017. mornyng H, J, H 5, morning P.

2023. ech] his R — partie] truly J.

2024. day] lady R — do] doto R. 2026. Seynt] om. H.

2028. 1st of] for H.

Folk expert the trouthe may nat denye.	2036	Men are rewarded according to their deserts; and what is the reward of lechery?
Cerche out the reward of cursid lecherye:		
Where it is vsed, the houshold may nat <i>preue</i> ;		
In this mateer to Charlis hath an iye,		
The faire day to preise toward eue.	2040	
Noble Princis, all vices eschewyng,		Noble Princess, withdraw yourselves from riot, fleshly lusts and vicious company, oppress no man and assist the poor. Let men report your prudent policy when your age draws to eve.
Your hih corages lat resoun modefie;		
Witbdrawe your hand fro riotous wachching;		
Fleeth flessfli lustis and vicious companye;	2044	
Oppressith no man; doth no tirannye;		
Socoure the needi; poore folk doth releewe;		
Lat men reporte the prudent policie		
Of your last age whan it draweth to eue.	2048	

[Off Hugolyne erle of Pyse slayn in prisoun.]¹

O FF Charlis story rad þe woful fyn,		Ugolino, earl of Pisa, was slain in prison by his subjects, who arose against him
As ye haue herd þe maner & the guise,		
To Ihon Bochas appeered Hugolyn,		
Callid whilom the noble Erl of Pise,	2052	
Til the Pisanys gan ageyn hym rise;*		
Most vengably, cruel & vnkynde,		
Slouh hym in prisoun; no mor of hym I fynde, —		

[Athon kyng of Ar[me]nye / put from his ri[ght] by his brothire.]²

Sauff his childre, of hatreede and envie,	2056	and slew his children also. Aiton, king of Armenia, a famous Christian prince who fought the Tatars, was
Wer moord[e]rid eek in a deep prisoun.		
¶ Next with his compleynt the kyng of Armenye		
Cam tofor Bochas, that callid was Achoun,		
A Cristene prince ful famous of renoun;	2060	
For our feith, from which he list nat erre,		
Geyn Tartarynes long tyme he heeld gret werre.		

2045. doth] do H.

2050. As] as her H. 2053. rise] hem arise B.

2055. mor of hym I ne fynde H.

2056. hatreede] malis H, malice R 3.

2057. is misplaced at end of stanza H — eek] also R.

2058. The paragraph mark is misplaced at the beginning of the next line in B — Armony R.

2059. Aiton P.

2062. Tantarynes H, Tartarians P, Tartaryens H 5.

¹ MS. J. leaf 177 recto.

² MS. J. leaf 177 recto, margin pared by binder.

treasonably
robbed of the
throne by his
brother Sabath,
who cast him
in prison and
blinded him.

This manli kyng, in kniethod ful famous, [p. 432]
It was shewed, his stori who list reede, 2064
Hadde a brother fell and despitous
Callid Sabath, desirous to succede,
Stede of his brother the kyngdam to posseede;
Be fals[e] tresoun reued hym of his riht, 2068
Kept hym in hold[e] and put out his siht.

But another
brother chased
Sabath from
the country
and, capturing
him, cast him
in prison,
where he died.
Lo, how the
Lord can
reward treason
and murder!

This Sabath loste bothe happ & grace,
His other brother, as maad is menciouun,
Be strong hond[e] put hym from his place, 2072
Chacid hym out of that regioun.
Take be force and fetrid in prisoun,
Deide ther; no man list hym visite:
Loo, how God can tresoun and moordre quite! 2076

[How pope Boneface the viijth was take by the
Lynage de Columpnys / ete his hondes & died
in prisoun.]¹

About the
year 1300, Pope
Boniface the
Eighth

AMONG thes woful froward princis thre
Which shewed hem so ougli of þer chere,
Pope Boneface be gret aduersite,
Eihte of that name, gan taproche neer. 2080
A thousand thre hundred acountid was þe yeer
Fro Cristes berthe be computacioun,
Whan that he made his lamentacioun.

laid an
interdict on all
France;

This same pope kauhte occasioun, 2084
Which vndir Petir kepte gouernaunce,
To interdicte* al the regioun,
Tyme of kyng Phelipp regnyng þer in France;
Directe bollis down into Constaunce 2088
To Nicholas, maad[e] be Boneface,
Archidekne of the same place.

but the prelates
and bishops of
France proved
that he injured
the church, and

Off hooli cherche the prelatis nih echon,
Bisshoppis of Fraunce felli haue declarid, 2092
Preuyng be poyntis many mo than oon
In a gret seen[e] pleynli & nat spared,

2063. ful] most H. 2076. moordre & tresoun H — tresoun]
reson R.

2077. thre] iij B. 2080. taproche] approche R.

2081. hundred] C B — was] om. R.

2086. interdicte] Interducte B, Entirdite H.

2088. into] vn to H. 2091. nih] nyth R.

2094. seen[e] sene R, H, H 5, R 3, synne J, Scene P.

¹ MS. J. leaf 177 verso.

- Be hym the cherche was hurt & nat reparid;
 Put on hym crymes of gret misgouernaunce, 2096
 Denouncid* hym enemy to al the lond of France.
- Put [up]on hym many gret outrage,
 Wrongli how he hadde doon offence
 To a cardynal born of the lynage 2100
 De Columpnis, a kynreede of reuerence;
 For which[e] cause he kept hym in absence
 Out of the court, drouh wher he was born;
 Be which occasioun the pope his lif hath lorn. 2104
- De Columpnis the lynage hath so wrouht:
 Took Boniface for his old cruelte;
 With gret poweer & force thei haue hym brouht
 Into a castel which stood in the cite, 2108
 Callid Sancti Angeli; gaf auctorite
 To a cardynal, & be commyssioun
 Poweer to doon ful execusioun.
- Of thes mateeris hangyng in ballaunce 2112
 Atween parties, wer it riht or wrong,
 Bothe of Romeyns, prelatis eek of France,
 The pope ay kept withynne the castel strong,
 Of auenture, nat bidyng ther riht long, 2116
 Fill in a flux, and aftirward for neede,
 For hunger eet his hondis, as I reede.
- Hour of his deyng, it is maad mencioniun,
 Aboute the castel was merueillous lihtnyng, 2120
 Wher the pope lay fetrid in prisoun, —
 Non such afforn was seyn in ther lyuyng.
 And whil Bochas was besi in writyng,
 To write the fall[e] of this Boniface, 2124
 The Ordre of Templaris cam toforn his face.

denounced him
as an enemy
of the country.

They accused
him of many
outrages,
especially of
wronging a
cardinal of the
house of
Colonna,

whose
family took
Boniface and
imprisoned him
in the fortress
of St. Angelo,

where he fell
in a flux
and afterwards
ate his hands
for hunger.

It is said that
marvellous
lightning
played
about the
castle when he
died.

[How the ordre of Templars was founded and
 [Iaques] with other of the ordre brent.]¹

¶ Croniclars the trouthe can recorde,
 Callyng to mynde the first fundacioun,
 And olde auctours therwithal accorde, 2128

2097. Denouncid] Denouncyng B, R, H 5, J.

2108. the] their H. 2113. it] it be H, R 3.

2121. the] this H, R 3. 2125. afforn R.

MS. J. leaf 177 verso. Iaques is supplied from P.

- The Order of
Templars was
founded at the
time when
Godfrey de
Bouillon won
Jerusalem, by
certain knights
who fought
there.
- Of thes Templeeris how the religioun
Gan thilke tyme whan Godfrey Bollioum
Hadde wonne, that noble knihtli man,
Iherusalem, that ordre first began. 2132
- Bi certeyn knihtis which did her besi peyne,
Whan the said[e] cite was first wonne
Be noble Godfrey, duk whilom of Loreyne,
Ther crownid kyng, this ordre thei begonne, — 2136
Olde bookis weel reherse konne, —
Takyng a ground of pouert & meeknesse,
To founde this ordre did her besynesse.
- Their guiding
principles were
poverty,
humility and
chastity, and
they lived in
the temple not
far from the
city.
- Ther begynnyng cam of deuocioun, 2140
The ground Itake of wilful pouerte;
And made first ther habitacioun
Be the temple, nat ferr from the cite,
In tokne of clenness sworn to chastite, 2144
Of the temple lik to ther desirs
Took that name & callid wer Templeeris.
- Pope Honorius
gave them
license to wear
a white habit,
to which
Eugenius added
a red cross.
- Pope Honorie gaff hem* auctorite, [p. 433]
Of hooli cherche beyng that tyme hed; 2148
A whiht habit thei bar for chastite;
Eugenivs afftir gaf hem a cros of red.
And to diffende pilgrymes, out of dreed,
Geyn Saresyn[e]s thoruh ther hih renoun, 2152
This was cheef poynt of ther professioun.
- So long as
they lived in
perfection their
fame spread;
- Whil thei lyuede in wilful pouerte,
Thes crossid knihtis in mantlis clad of whiht,
Ther name spradde in many ferr contre; 2156
For in perfeccioun was set al ther deliht.
Folk of deuocioun kauht an appetiht
Them for tencrece, gaf hem gret almesse,
Bi which thei gan encrece in gret richesse. 2160
- but as they
increased in
numbers and
wealth they
lost their
virtue and gave
themselves up
to luxury
and vice.
- Bi processe withynne a fewe yeeris,
The noumbre gret of ther religioun;
And the fame of thes seid Templeeris
Gan spreede wide in many regioun. 2164
Ther sodeyn risyng, of ther pocessioun,
With touns, castellis, thei gaf hem to delices,
Appalled in vertu, which brouht in many vices.

2136. thei] first H.

2156. name] names H.

2162. ther] that R.

2147. hem] hym B.

2160. encrece] wexe H 5.

2165. Ther] þe H.

- It wer to longe for to rekne hem alle; 2168 A knight
 But among other I fynde ther was oon, named
 A manli kniht, folk* Iaqués did hym calle, Jacques de
 Gret of auctorite among hem euerichon, Molay,
 As cronicles remembre of yore agon, a Frenchman
 The which[e] Iaqués in the rewm of France born to rich
 Was born of blood to gret enheritaunce, inheritance,
 was of great
 authority
 among them.
- The same Iaqués, holde a manli kniht and as
 In his gynnyng, fressh, lusti of corage, 2176 his older
 Hadde a brother, be elder title of riht brother kept
 Occupied al hool the heritage, possession of
 the heritage,
- Because Iaqués yonger was of age, 2180
 Which myht[e] nat be no condicioun
 Nothyng cleyme of that pocioun.
- His elder brother occupied al, and Jacques
 Whil this Iaqués was but of low degree, had always
 Wonder desirous with hym to been* egal, 2184 been held back
 Always put bak be froward pouerte. by poverty, he
 And to surmounte, yif it wolde bee, finally got
 Fond out a mene lik to his desirs, himself
 Was chose maister of thes Templeeris. appointed
 grand master,
- Was promotid be free eleccioun 2188
 Bi them that sholde chesyn hym of riht; wherethrough
 Wherbi he hadde gret domynacioun, he obtained
 Richesse, tresour, gret poweer & myht. great power
 Of his persone was eek a manli kniht, — and wealth.
 The same tyme, put in remembraunce, 2192
 Phelipp Labele crownid kyng in France.
- Which hadde of Iaqués gret indignacioun, 2196 Philip IV. of
 To alle the Templeris and al ther cheualrie, France, who
 Caste weies to ther destruccioun, hated the
 Gaf auctorite his lust to fortiefie, Templars,
 Doun fro the pope, bookis specefie, determined to
 Clement the Sexte, concludyng yif he may, 2200 destroy them.
 Alle the Templeeris destroie hem on a day.

2169. fynde] rekne H.

2170. folk] Folkis B.

2184. with hym to been] to been (be) with hym B, J, P, H 5.

2186. bee] ha be H, R 3, have be R, H 5.

2187. to] om. H.

2195. Labele] la bele R, J, R 3, label H 5, Le Bele H, la Bele P.

2199. to] forto R.

2202. a] oo H.

He had them suddenly imprisoned for certain horrible crimes; and their friends advised them to plead guilty and beg for mercy.

For certeyn crymes horrible to heere,
 Alle attonis wer set in prisoun, 2204
 Bi ther freendis touching this mateere
 Counseilled to axe merci & pardoun,
 That thei sholde be pley[n] confessioun
 Requere mercy, knelyng on a rowe, 2208
 And as it was ther trespas been aknowe.

Jacques and three others were detained, while the rest, tied to stakes ready for burning, were led to believe that the king would pardon them if they confessed.

Iaques was take, and with hym othir thre,
 Kept in holde and [in]to prisoun sent. 2212
 And the remnaunt for ther iniquite
 Ordeyned wern be open iugement
 To myhti stakes to be teied and brent.
 The kyng in maner lik to doon hem grace,
 So thei wolde confesse ther trespasce. 2216

They would not confess, but cried piteously that they were innocent until they died.

But al for nouht; thei wer so indurat,
 Alle of accord[e] and of o corage
 To axe mercy verray obstynat. 2220
 The fire reedi, al with o langage,
 Whan the flawme approched ther visage,
 Ful pley[n]li spak [&] cried pitousli,
 Of ther accus how thei wer nat gilty.

Fro ther purpos list nat to declyne; 2224
 But with o vois echon[e] an[d] o sown
 Fulli affermed til thei did[e] fyne,
 How ther ordre and ther religioun
 Igroundid was upon perfeccioun, 2228
 And how ther deth, verraili in deede,
 Compassid was of malis & hatreede.

Jacques was taken to Lyons and there publicly confessed and was burnt to ashes.

The saide Iaques, of whom I spak tofor[n], [p. 434]
 Brouht to a place which callid was Leoun, 2232
 Tofor too legatis, or that his lyff was lorn,
 Al openli made his confessioun:
 He was worthi, for short conclusioun,
 For to be ded be rihtful iugement. 2236
 This was his eende; to ashes he was brent.

2207. That thei] Thei that R.

2208. rowe] trowe R.

2222. &] om. H, R, J, R 3, H 5, P — pitousli] spitously R.

2224. to] om. R.

2235. He] And R.

¶ Here Bochas makith a comendacion of thre
Philisophris for their pacience.¹

YIUUNG a pris to philisophres thre, Bochas comendith <i>with</i> gret dilligence		Bochas now commend three philosophers who were of old time praised for their fortitude and patience.
How ech of hem was in his contre	2240	
Souereynli be vertuouſ excellence		
Off old comendid for ther pacience,		
Which may be set and crownid in his stall		
As emperesse among vertues all.	2244	
Mong Siciliens first Theodorus,		Theodorus of Sicily, Anaxarchus of Greece and
For pacience hadde in gret reuerence;		
Among Grekis, the stori tellith vs,		
Anaxerses for his magnificence,	2248	
Bi force of vertu groundid <i>on</i> pacience,		
Because he was [both] vertuouſ & wis,		
For suffraunce gat hym a souereyn pris.		
Among[es] Romey[n]s put in remembrance,	2252	Scævola of Rome, who allowed his hand to be consumed by fire.
S[c]euola, bothe philisophre & kniht,		
For his marcial hardi strong constauce,		
Whan that he heeld amynd the flawmys liht*		
Hand and fyngres aboue the coles briht,	2256	
Til the ioyntes, fallyng heer & yonder,		
From the wirste departid wer assonder.		
¶ First Theodorus, born in the famous ile,		Theodorus was bound in chains and burning gads were laid on his body, and
Be pacience gret peynes enduryng,	2260	
Cheeff philisophre callid of Cicile,		
<i>With</i> cheynys bounde upon the ground liggynng,		
On his bodi leid gaddis red brennyng,		
Suffryng this peyne, list it nat refuse,	2264	
Bi kyng Iherom, the tiraunt Siracuse.		
For comoun proffit suffrid al [t]his peyne,		he suffered all for the sake of the com- mon weal;
Long tyme afforn[e] liggynng in prisoun;		for he
Which bassent of mo than on or tueyne	2268	

2238. pris] laude H. 2254. For] bi H.
 2255. liht] briht B, H, R, J — flawmys] flame P.
 2256. aboue] among P.
 2258. wirste] wrest R, J, P, wrost R 3, wristis H 5.
 2264. this] his R, H, J.
 2265. Siracuse] of Siracuse H, R 3, P. 2266. this] his J.

¹ *The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 178 b: "Bochas here commendith Theodorus with othir ij philosophres for their pacience notably."*

- was one of the conspirators who slew the tyrant Hiero
- Was the most cheef be conspiracioun
To brynge the tiraunt to his destruccioun;
For no peyne that he myhte endure,
The coniuracioun he wold nat discure. 2272
- and chose rather to die in mischief than discover the names of his fellows. He believed that no man should spare to slay a tyrant, and bore his torture in patience until he died.
- Rather he ches in myscheeff for to deie,
Than the* name openli declare
Of hym that slouh the tiraunt, soth to seie.
Thouhte of riht no man sholde spare, 2276
For comoun proffit, helthe and weelfare
To slen a tiraunt, deemyng for the beste,
Alle a regioun for to sette at reste.
For which[e] title, he list to suffre deth, 2280
Al [t]his torment took most pacientli
Theodorus, til he yald up the breth,
Gruchched nat with noise nor loude cry;
Amyd whos herte rootid [so] feithfulli 2284
Was comoun proffit, Bochas writ the same,
Among Siciliens to getyn hym a name.
- Anaxarchus, to prevent mortal wars, rebuked the tyrant Nicocreon of Cyprus, who
- ¶ Grekis also comende aboff the steris
Anaxeres and gretli magnific,
Cause that he to stynte mortal werris
List nat spare taquiten his partie
In rebukyng manli the tyrannye
Of Nicocreoun, tiraunt ful mortall, 2292
Regnyng in Cipre in his estat roiall.
Spared nat nouthor for deth nor dreed
Hym to rebuke bi vertuous langage.
The tiraunt badde kutte [out] of his hed 2296
His tunge in haste; but he with strong corage
Saide he sholde haue non auantage
Of that membre, which, maugre al his miht,
Hadde tolde hym trouthe in [the] peeplis siht. 2300
- in a rage bade men cut out his tongue. But Anaxarchus said he should have no advantage of it,
- and biting off his tongue chewed it in small pieces which he spat in the tyrant's face.
- Off his manace sette litil tale,
Boot of his tunge, of hardi strong corage,
Chewed it al on pecis smale;
Of manli herte thouhte it no damage; 2304
Spit it out into the visage

2274. the] be B, bi J.

2277. þe welfare H, R 3. 2279. at] a R.

2281. this] his R, H.

2296. out] om. R, J, P, H 5.

2302. hardi] harde H. 2305. Spet R.

- Of the tiraunt; gat so the victorie,
 To putte his name euermor in memorie.
- ¶ And S[c]euola, egal to thes tweyne, [p. 435] 2308 Scævola, who missed the tyrant Porsenna with his dart,
- For comoun proffit, be iust comparisoun,
 Put hym in pres[e]; did his besi peyne
 To slen Porsenna, enemy to Roome toun.
 For tacomplisshe his entencioun 2312
- Took a strong dart, riht passyngli trenchaunt,
 With al his myht[e] cast at the tiraunt.
- Of his marke cause he dide faille
 To slen his enemy aftir his entente, 2316 burnt off his hand in bright red coals for love of his city,
- Which in Tuscan with many strong bataille
 [A]geyn[es] Romeyns with his knihtis wente,
 This S[c]euola his owne hande brente,
 Cause that he failled of his art, 2320
 To slen Porsenna be casting of his dart.
- To declare the force of his manheede
 Vpon hymself auengid for to bee,
 As I haue told, in briht[e] coles rede 2324 deeming that he deserved such punishment.
- His hand he brente for loue of his cite,
 Onli taquite his magnanymyte,
 Of feruent loue his cite for tauaille,
 To slen the tiraunt cause he did[e] faille. 2328
- Thus for to putte the marcial suffrance
 Of thes notable philisophres thre
 In perpetuel mynde and remembraunce,
 How thei hem quite ech lik his degre 2332 All the joy of these noble philosophers lay in their being of avail to the common weal.
- For ther purparti vnto the comounte,
 Cause al ther ioie and ther inward deliht
 Was for avail of the comoun proffit.
- First Theodorus put hymself in pres 2336 Theodorus, who died in prison for the Sicilians,
 For Ciciliens to deien in prisoun;
 And for Grekis noble Anexerses,
 His tunge torn, felt gret[e] passioun;
 And S[c]euola for Romeyns & ther toun 2340 Anaxarchus, who tore his tongue, and Scævola, who burnt off his hand, were
- Suffred his hand, be short auisement,
 Tokne of trouthe, in colis to be brent.
- A martirdam it was, in ther maneer
 Of ther corage to haue so gret constauce; 2344

2313. strechaunte H. 2315. his] this R.

2318. Ageynes] Geyn R, J, P, H 5.

2319. he brente H, R 3, P. 2343. ther] om. R.

constant until
death, and are
now crowned
with laurel for
their patience.

Wer so stable of bodi, hert and cheer,
For comoun proffit, of face & contenance,
Vnto the deth withoute variaunce;
Gat the tryumphe be souereyn excellence, 2348
With laureer crownid for ther pacience.

As Phebus
surpasses a
little star, so
does patience
shew its bright
beams above all
other virtues.

Lik as Phebus passeth a lital sterre,
Hiest vpreised in his mydday speere,
So this vertu, in trouble, pes & werre, 2352
Cald pacience most fresshli doth appeere
Among vertues to shewe his bemys cleere;
For pacience knet with humylite,
Wher thei abide ther may non erour bee. 2356

It appeases the
hearts of
tyrants and

Tirauntis hertis this vertu doth appese,
Modifieth ther cruel fell woodnesse.
Rage of leouns, who list lyue in ese,
Of folk prostrat his malis doth repressse. 2360
Al our ioie began first with meeknesse;
For of Iuda the hardi strong leoun
A maidnes meeknesse from heuene brouht down.

vanquishes
champions.
It was the
meekness of a
maid that
wrought our
redemption.

In bataille & myhti strong sheltrouns, 2364
Avys with suffraunce wynneth the victorie;
Pacience venquisseth champions;
Lownesse in vertu be many old historie,
And meeknesse, perpetuel of memorie, — 2368
Al to conclude, groundid on resoun, —
A maidnes meeknesse wrouhte our redempcioun.

A Comendacion of pacience in stede of a Lenvoy.¹

Virtue of
virtues, O
noble Patience,
laud, honour
and reverence
be given to thee,

VERTU of vertues, o noble Pacience,
With laureer crownid for *vertuous* constauce,
Laude, honour, prys and reuerence 2373
Be youe to the, prynesse of most plesaunce,
Most rennommed be anxien remembraunce;
Of whom the myhti marcial armure 2376
Geyn al vices lengest may endure.
Ground and gynnyng to stonden at diffence
Ageyn Sathanis infernal puissaunce;

2361. with] at H, R, R₃. 2364. Batailles H.

2367. be] with H — old] obstynat R 3.

2368. of] in R. 2369. grounde H.

¹ The following heading is in MS. J. leaf 179 recto: "Bochas here commendith humylyte."

- Laureat queen, wher thou art in presence, 2380 the ground
Foreyn outrages haue no gouernaunce; upon which
Conduit, hedspring of plenteuous habundaunce, we may
Cristal welle, celestial of figure, stand against
Geyn alle vices whiche lengest may endure. 2384 Satan, which
may longest
endure against
all vices.
- Cheef founderesse be souereyn excellence [p. 436] Foundress of
Of goostli beeldyng and spiritual substaunce, spiritual up-
Emperesse of most magnificence, building,
With heuenli spiritis next of alliaunce, 2388 empress
of most
magnificence
- With lyff euerlastyng thi tryumphes to auaunce,
And ioie eternal thi noblesse to assure*
In the aureat Throne perpetueli tendure,
- Thre iherarchies ther beyng in presence, 2392 in the heavenly
With whom humylite hath souereyn aqueyntaunce, throne where
Wher osanna with deuout dilligence hosannah is
Is sung of aungelis be long contynuaunce, sung by angels,
Tofor the Throne keepyng ther obseruaunce 2396
- Syng Sanctus Sanctus, record of scripture,
With vois memorial perpetueli tendure,
- The brennyng loue of Cherubyn be feruence, Cherubim and
Parfit in charite, dilligent obeissaunce; 2400 Seraphim
and the Nine
Orders.
- And Seraphyn with humble obedience,
And Ordres Nyne be heuenli concordauce,
Domynaciones with vertuous attendauce, 2404
Affor the Trynyte syng fresshli be mesure,
With vois memorial perpetueli tendure.
- Suffraunce of paynemys hath but an apparence, The constancy
Doon for veynglorie,* hangyng in ballaunce; of pagans is
But Cristis martirs, in verray existence 2408 but
appearance
done for
vainglorie;
List ageyn tirauntes make repugnaunce; but Christ's
Rather deie than doon God displesaunce, martyrs are
Shewed in no merour liknesse nor picture, faithful unto
Take full pocessioun for euere with Crist tendure. death.
- Suffraunce for vertu hath the premynence 2413 Record on
Of them that sette in God ther affiaunce; Stephen,
Record on Steuene, Vincent and Laurence, Vincent, Lau-
Blissid Edmond bi long perseueraunce 2416 rence, blessed
Edmund, who
Suffred for our feith victorious greuaunce, suffered
victorious pain
for our faith,

2390. thi] bi R — tassure B, R. 2407. veyngloire B.

2408. But] Bi R.

2412. tendure] endure R.

2415. on] off R, of H, R 3, P, H 5.

Kyng, maide and martir, a palme to recure,
In the heuenli court perpetuelli tendure.

as have many
other saints,
And for to sette a maner difference, 2420
In Bochas book told eueri circumstaunce,
How for our feith be ful gret violence
Dyuers seyntis haue suffrid gret penaunce,
Stable of ther cheer, visage and contenaunce, 2424
Neuer to varye for non auenture;
Lik Cristis champions perpetuelli tendure.

who loved
and feared God
and lived and
died in the
hope of enduring
forever with
Patience.
Whos fundacioun bi notable prouidence,
Groundid on Crist ther soulis for tauaunce, 2428
Graue in ther hertis & in ther conscience,
Voidyng al trouble of worldli perturbauce,
Chaungis of Fortune with hir double chaunce;
Loued God & dradde, aboff ech creature, 2432
In hope with hir perpetuelli tendure.

[How Philip la Bele kyng of Fraunce was slayn with
a wilde boor and of his thre sones and their
weddyng.]¹

Philip the
Fair then
came to Bochas
to complain
his unhappy
fate; for he
WHAN Bochas hadde write of pacience
And comendid the vertu of suffraunce,
Phelipp la Bele cam to his presence, 2436
Fifte of that name crownid kyng of France,
Gan compleyne his vnhappi chaunce
And on Fortune, of custum þat kan varie,
Which was to hym cruel aduersarie. 2440

was slain by a
wild boar in
the Forest of
Compiègne,
after he
had been
vanquished
and put to
shame in
Flanders.
Woundid he was, [&] with a greuous soor
Gan his compleynt to Bochas determyne,
How he was slay[e]n of a wilde boor
In a forest which callid is Compigne; 2444
Tolde how he was disclaundrid [&] al his lyne;
Onis in Flaundris, with many a worþi kniht,
Venquished of Flemmynges & felli put to fliht.

He had four
sons and a
daughter
Isabell,
Proceedyng ferther gan touche of his lynage, 2448
How in his tyme he hadde sonys thre:
Lowis, Phelipp & Charlis yong of age,
The fourte Robert; a douhtir also had he

2436. la Bele] le bele H. 2437. 2nd of] in H, R, R 3, H 5.
2445. &] om. R, R 3, H 5. 2446. worþi] wery H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 179 recto.

- Callid Isabell, riht excellent of beute. 2452
 Seide Robert, the stori is weel kouth,
 Which that deide in his tendre youth.
- To this stori who list haue good reward,
 The circumstance wisli to discerne, 2456
 His douhtir Isabell was weddid to Edward
 Carnervan, the book so doth vs lerene.
 This yonger Phelipp weddid in Nauerne
 The kynges douhtir, a statli mariage, 2460
 Callid Iane, whil she was tendre of age.
- The same Phelipp aftir crownyd kyng
 Of Nauerne, his fadir of assent,
 Fyue sonis he hadde in his lyuyng; 2464
 Of which[e] fyue, as in sentement,
 Thre in noubre be riht pertynent
 To the mateer, who-so list to look,
 And the processe of this same book. 2468
- The eldest sone callid was Lowis, [p. 437] Philip le
 To whom his fadir gaf pcessioun Bel's eldest
 Of Nauerne, because that he was wis son was
 For to gouerne that noble regioun. afterwards
 Phelipp his brothir for his hih renoun Louis X., and
 Was aftirward be iust enheritaunce the second son,
 And rihtful title crownid kyng of France. Philip V. the
 Tall. 2472
- The thridde brothir was be tittle of riht 2476 The third son,
 Maad Erl of March, and namyd was Charlis. Charles IV.,
 Euerich of hem in the peeplis siht was made Earl
 Wer famous holde & passyng of gret prys. of March, and
 And for thei wern riht manli and riht wis all three were
 Phelipp and Charlis took in tendre age famous, manly
 The erlis douhtren of Burgoyne in mariage. and wise. 2480
 Philip and
 Charles mar-
 ried daughters
 of the Earl
 of Burgundy,
- But as the stori remembreth in certeyne,
 To ther noblesse Fortune had envie; 2484
 And bi a maner of malis and disdeyne
 Brouht in be processe vpon the partie
 Of ther too wyues froward auoutrie,
 Causyng the deth of alle thes princis thre, 2488
 Whan thei most floured in ther felicite.

2456. discerne] concerne H. 2459. This] The H.

2483. the] ther R.

2486. in be] into R. 2488. thes] the R.

Charles of Tarentum, who tried to make peace between the Guelphs and Ghibellines.

¶ Aftr thes thre princis glorious,
Tofor Bochas to shewen his entent,
A mihti duk, notable and riht famous, 2492
Cam to compleyne, Charlis of Tharente,
Which in his tyme to Florence wente
To make pes in his roial estat
Tween Guerff and Gemelius standing at debat. 2496

was born of the blood of France: but he was slain by an arrow in the wars between Florence and Pisa.

The saide Charlis, born of the blood of France,
A manli kniht, the stori doth deuise,
Bi whos unhappi froward fatal chaunce
In the werris atween Florence & Pise, 2500
On hors[e]bak sittung in* knihtli wise,
Hurt with an arwe, fill lowe down to grounde,
Wherbi he kauhte his laste fatal wounde.

A Pisan soldier who trod on his body as it lay on the ground was made knight by the Ghibelline captain.

A man of armys beyng a soudiour 2504
With the Pisauys, wer it wrong or riht,
Of fals disdeyn that day did his labour
To trede on Charlis in the peeplis siht,
Whan he lay gruff; wherfor he was maad kniht 2508
Be ther capteyn for a maner pride,
Which gouerned the Gibelynes side.

While Bochas sat still in his seat with a heavy cheer, Dante of Florence, the laureate poet, appeared to him with impressive countenance.

AND in his studie with ful heuy cheer
A Whil Iohn Bochas abood still in his seete, 2512
To hym appeered & gan approche neer
Daunte of Florence, the laureate poete,
With his ditees and rethoriques sueete,
Demure of look, fulfilled with pacience, 2516
With a visage notable of reuerence.

Bochas arose and met him with great reverence, saying:
"O brightest sun, daystar of our city,

Whan Bochas sauh hym, vpon his feet he stood,
And to meete hym he took his pas ful riht,
With gret reuerence aualed capp and hood, 2520
And to hym seide with humble cheer & siht:
"O cleerest sonne, daysterre and souereyn liht*
Of our cite, which callid is Florence,
Laude onto the, honour and reuerence! 2524

Thou hast enlumyned Itaile & Lumbardie
With laureat dities in thi flouryng daies,

2496. Guerff] Guelphes P — Gemelius] Gemelyns J, Gamelyns R 3, Gibellines P, Gemelyus H, Genelius R.

2501. in] on B. 2505. wher it wer wrong or riht H, R 3.

2522. daysterre and souereyn liht] O verry sothfast liht B, R, J, H 5.

- Ground and gynner of prudent policie,
 Mong Florentynes suffredist gret affraies;
 As gold purid, preeued at al assaies,
 In trouthe madest meekli thi-silue strong
 For comoun profit to suffre peyne & wrong.
- O noble poete, touching this mateer,
 How Florentynes wer to the vnkynde,
 I wil remembre and write with good cheer
 Thi pitous exil and put heer in mynde."
 "Nay," quod Daunte, "but heer stant oon
 behynde,
 Duk of Athenis; turne toward hym þi stile,
 His vnkouth stori breefli to compile.
- And yif thou list to do me this plesaunce,
 To descryue his knihtli excellence,
 I wil thou putte his lyff in remembrance,
 How he oppressid be myhti violence
 This famous cite [which] callid [is] Florence;
 Be which[e] stori ful pleyntli thou shalt see,
 Which wer freendis & foon to that* cite,
 And which wer hable for to been excusid,
 Yif the trouthe be cleerli apparceyued;
 And which wer worthi for to be refusid,
 Be whom the cite ful falsli was deceyued,
 The circumstaunces notabli conceyued,
 To rekne in ordre upon eueri side,
 Which sholde be chacid & which shold abide."

2528 thou hast
illumined Italy
and Lombardy
with thy works
and suffered
pain and
wrong for the
common weal.

2532 "O noble poet,
I will write
with good
cheer thy
sad exile."
"Nay," said
Dante, "turn
thy pen to the
Duke of
Athens,
who stands
behind me.

2540 "Do me this
pleasure and
describe his
knightly
excellence and
tell how he
oppressed the
city of
Florence,

2544

2548 so that thou
shalt know
which were
friends and
which were
foes to the
town."

2552

[How Duk Gaultere of Florence for his tyrannye
 Lecherye and couetise ended in mischef.]¹

- AND whan Bochas knew al thentencioun [p. 438] And when
 Of seide Daunte, he cast hym anon riht 2538 Bochas took
 Tobeie* his maister, as it was resoun; up his pen
 Took his penne; and as he cast his siht 2540 to obey his
 A lite a-side, he sauh no maner wiht 2542 master he saw
 Sauf Duk Gaulteer, of al that longe day; no one but
 For Daunt vnwarli vanshed was a-way. 2544 Duke Gaultier;
 for Dante had
 vanished.

2533. How] How the R. 2536. but] *om.* H, P.
 2539. thou] ye H. 2545. that] the B, J, this H.
 2549. was] wer H — deceyued] *om.* R.
 2555. To obeie B.

¹ MS. J. leaf 180 recto.

- This said
Gaultier was
of the blood
of France; and
his father,
lord of Athens,
- This saide Gaulteer, breeffi to proceede,
Lik as it is lput in remembraunce,
Touchyng his lyne an[d] his roial kynreede,
He was discendid of the blood of France.
Bi long processe and knihtli purueyaunce
His fadir first, be dilligent labour,
Of Athenys was lord and gouernour.
- 2560
- was put down
by the Greeks
and his head
smitten off.
- Stood but a while in cleer pecessioun,
Grekis to hym hadde ful gret envie,
Caste of assent[e] for to putte hym down
And depryve hym of his famous duchie;
To ther entent a leiseer did espie,
Took hym at myscheef, &, quaking in his dreed,
Of hih despiht in hast smet of his hed.
- 2564
- 2568
- To avenge his
death Gaultier
resolved to
besiege the
city, but was
unsuccessful,
and at that
time two
Pisan princes
began to lay
siege to Lucca.
- Vpon whos deth auengid for to bee
The saide Gaulteer with myhti apparaille
Caste he wolde asege that cite;
But of his purpos longe he dide faille.
And in this while, *with* many gret* bataile,
Too myhti princis wer come down of Pise,
Leid a siege to Luk in knihtli wise.
- 2576
- 2580
- The Florentines
came down to
help the
Luccans, but
were defeated;
- Florentynes to Luk wer faourable;
And to delyuere the siege fro the toun,
With multitude almost innumerable
Made ordynaunce; & knihtli thei *cam* down,
Which turned aftir to ther destruccioun:
For it fill so of mortal auenture,
On Florentynes fill the disconfiture.
- 2584
- and at this
Gaultier went
to Florence
from Naples
- The noise and fame of this gret bataile
Gan sprede ferr bi report of langage
In Lombardie and thoruh[ou]t al Itaile
Mong soudiour[e]s lusti of corage;
And among othir, feynyng a pilgrimage,
The saide Gaulteer be vnwar violence
Cam fro Naplis down into Florence.
- 2588
- 2592
- and was
chosen
governor by a
parliament of
magnates,
- The Florentynes heeld first a parlement
For the sauacioun and garde of her cite,
Be gret prudence and gret ausement
- 2596

2570. his] that R, H, R 3, P, H 5.

2578. gret] strong B, J, P.

2579. Pise] Parise H.

2589. report] recorde H.

- Of suich as wer[e]n hiest of degre;
 Bi oon assent thei gaff the souereynte
 Them to gouerne, hoping to ther encres, 2600
 With statutis made bothe for werre & pes.
- The gret estatis, reulers of the toun,
 Callid magnates tho daies in sothnesse,
 To Gaulteer gaff this domynacioun, 2604
 Of entent the comouns to oppresse
 And marchauntes to spoille of ther richesse,
 Streyne men of crafft be froward violence
 Ageyn the libertes vsid in Florence. 2608
- The people alway in a-wait liggyng
 To be restorid onto ther liberte,
 Gan gruche sore, among hemsilf pleynyng
 For gret extorsiouns doon to ther cite; 2612
 The grete also, of most auctorite,
 Hadde leuere to suffre Gaulteer regne,
 Than ther exacciouns to modifie or restreyne.
- The saide Gaulteer in ful sotil wise, 2616
 Be a fals maner of symulacioun,—
 Enmy in herte vnto ther fraunchise;
 Al that he wrouhte, for short conclusioun,
 Was doon oonli to ther destruccioun, 2620
 With a pretence feyned of freendliheed,
 To his promys ay contrarie was the deed,—
- Clamb up be processe to ful hih estat
 Be feyned speche and sotil flaterie; 2624
 In his herte wex pompous & elat,
 His werking outward no man koude espie;
 Lite and litil drouh to his partie,
 That to conclude, shortli for to seie, 2628
 Al Florence his lustis did obeie.
- Gan sotill plesse the comounte,
 For to acompliss falsli his desirs,
 Made promys tencrece ther liberte 2632
 To suich as wer[e]n froward of maneeres;
 Made an oth to stroie ther officeeres,
 But thei wolde of ther fre volunte
 Graunte onto hym larger liberte, 2636

whose
intention
was to plunder
the merchants
and rob the
town of its
liberties.

The people
were dis-
contented, but
the notables
preferred to let
Gaultier reign
rather than
modify their
exactions.

Gaultier
feigned
friendship for
both parties,

and climbed up
by degrees
to such
power that
all Florence
carried out
his desires.

He made him-
self popular
with the
commons by
promising to
increase their
franchises,

2599 is repeated H. 2608. the] there J, theyr P.
 2624 is misplaced at end of stanza H. 2627. litil] lite H, R 3.

and finally
became so
powerful and
tyrannous as
to menace the
very greatest
of the town.

Gretter power and domynacioun
Tenece his miht upon eueri side.

[p. 439]

Gan manace the grettest of the toun
And day be day encesen in his pride; 2640
Felli began, felli [he] did abide;
Wherupon,* kept cloos in ther entraille,
The Florentynes gretli gan meruaille.

At this time
one Reyner,
a high officer
in Florence,
supported
Gaultier in

In this while was ther oon Reyneer,* 2644
Of gret auctorite and of gret reuerence,
A mihti seruaunt and a gret officer,
To whos bidding obeyed al Florence,
Which with Gaulteer acorded in sentence, 2648
With soudiours hadde stuffid ech hostrye
For to susteene of Gaulteer the partie.

order to share
in his
tyranny.

And traitourli for to fortefe
Thentent of Gaulteer, fel & ambicious, 2652
To haue thestat onli be tirannye,
As ther cheeff lord, froward & surquedous,
To regne in Florence; the cas was pereilous,
Whan too tirauntis be bothe of oon assent 2656
With multitude tacomplisshethe ther entent.

The magnates
could do
nothing but
acquiesce,

Which thyng considred bi ther *gouernours*
And magnates callid in the cite,
Whan that thei fond among hem no socours 2660
To remedien ther gret aduersite;
Fill to accord[e] of necessite,
Gaff ther assent withoute variaunce,
That Gaulteer sholde haue al the *gouernaunce*. 2664

and agreed
that Gaultier
should swear
on the body
of Christ to
restore them
their old
franchises.

And *condescendid* thei wer to this issu,
That Gaulteer sholde in al his beste wise
Vpon the bodi be sworn of Crist *Iesu*,
Them to restore onto ther fraunchise 2668
Vsid of old, and for no couetise
From ther promys, for lyff nor deth declyne,
As be *conuencioun* [the court] list determyne.

A trumpet was
blown and a
parliament held.
Gaultier made
his promise

Heerupon was blown a trumpet 2672
For tasseble thestat of the toun;
A parlement holde, Gaulteer first was set;

2642. Therupon B, P.

2644. R *omits lines* 2644 to 3588—ther was oon J, P—
Reyneer]Reymeer B. 2648. acorded] accord H.

2671] As the *conuencioun* list to determyne J.

- And to pronounce the convencion,
 With euery parcel entitle[d] be resoun, 2676
 Lik ther accord declaryng anon riht,
 Stood up a vocat in the peeplis siht.
- With men of armys in steel armid briht
 Vnto ther paleis cheef and princepall 2680
 The saide Gaulteer conveied anon riht,
 Set in a seete most statli and roiall.
 And the people with vois memoriall
 Gan crye loude, concluding this sentence: 2684
 Gaulteer for euere, cheef* lord of Florence —
- So to perseuere duryng al his lyff.
 Took in the paleis ful pociouun;
 Ther durste non ageyn it make striff; 2688
 Graunted to hym the domynacioun
 Of alle the castellis aboute enviroun, —
 Tuscan, Areche and castel Florentyn,
 With alle lordshipis to Mount Appenyn. 2692
- As ye haue herd[e], Gaulteer thus began.
 Bi his owne furious dyuynaille,
 Saide he was born to be lord of Tuscan,
 With a gret parti also of Itaille; 2696
 Tolde he was lad, conueied be a quaile,
 Saide ouermor[e], wer it riht or wronge,
 That was the sentence of the birdis songe.
- The same brid first brouht hym* to Florence, 2700
 Al the weie afforn hym took his filht;
 With soote syngyng did hym reuerence,
 Hih in the hair of corage glad and liht;
 Wolde neuer parte out of his siht; 2704
 Gaff hym tokenes to sette his herte affire,
 That of Florence he shold be lord & sire.
- The same bird he bar in his deuises
 Ful richeli enbroudid with perre; 2708
 Took upon hym many gret emprises
 As cheef lord of Florence the cite;
 Sat in iugement; gouernid the contre;

and,
 conveyed by
 men-at-arms,
 was set on his
 throne, while
 the people
 cried loudly,
 "Gaultier for-
 ever!"

He took
 possession
 of the palace
 and all the
 neighbouring
 castles and
 lordships.

Thus he
 began; and
 he said
 overmore that
 he was born
 to be lord of
 Tuscany, for
 a quail had
 told him so

and led him
 to Florence
 and done
 him reverence
 with its sweet
 singing.

He bore this
 same bird
 richly
 embroidered
 in his devices,
 and taking
 up the reins
 of government

2684. this] in J.

2685. cheef] was cheef B, P, R 3.

2686. al] om. H.

2691. Areche] Areth J, Aurette P.

2700. first brouht hym] brouht hym first B, J.

- surrounded himself with people of ill fame. Drouh to hym flaterers & folk þat koude lie, 2712
Baudis, ribaudis wher he myht hem espie.
- He was so covetous, lecherous and quarrelsome and lacking in all mercy and grace, that it is abominable to tell about him. Of that cite took merueillous truages; 2716
Crocheth to hym richessis of the toun;
Of lecherye vsid gret outrages,
Of maidnes, wyues maad non excepcioun.
Voide of mercy, grace and remysioun,
Fond quarelis for to be vengable,
That to reherse it is abhominable. 2720
- He slew those whom he hated and destroyed franchises and old liberties. Wher he hateth* merciles he sleth; [p. 440]
Brak fraunchises and old libertes.
The peple pleynid, desiryng sore his deth,
Cried vengauce aboute in ther citees 2724
For tiranye doon in the contrees,
Which was cause of gret discencioun
And of ther cite almost subuersioun.
- The peple desired his death and cried vengeance. They had lacked foresight to see the troubles that would follow, Thus thei wern among hemsilff deided 2728
For ther sodeyn greuous oppressioun;*
Lak of forsicht, that thei wer nat prouided
To seen myscheeuys that sholde falle in þe toun.
This verray soth: wher is dyuysioun, 2732
Be wisse and record of scripture,
May no kyngdam nor cite long endure.
- for which they now complained; and finally they began to conspire his destruction. For which thei gan compleyne oon & all, 2736
Bothe the grete and al the comounte;
And of accord among themsilff thei fall
To reforme the hurt of ther cite.
And fynalli the[i] condescendid bee
Bi a maner fell coniuracioun 2740
To proceede to his destruccioun.
- One day they armed themselves and cried, "Let us slay this tyrant," and laid siege to his palace. Vpon a day, thei armed in steel briht, 2744
Magnates first, with comouns of the toun,
Alle of assent thei roos up anon riht,
Gan to crie & make an hidous soun:
"Lat sle this tiraunt! lat vs pulle hym doun!"
Leide a siege be myhti violence
Afforn his paleis, wher he was in Florence. 2748

2715. accrochith H, Acrochith R 3, Accrocheth P.

2721. hateth] hated B. 2724. ther] othir H, R 3.

2725. the] theire J, their P.

2729. oppressioun] oppressiouns B — greuous sodeyn J, P.

2736. 1st the] o fthe J — 2nd the] of the J.

- Swich as wern enclined to Gaulteer,
 Amyd the paleis, the stori doth vs lerne,
 Teschewe the seege, *with* ful heuy cheere
 Ordeyned hemsilf to fleen away ful yerne 2752
 Out of the strengthe bi a smal posterne,
 Whan Florentynes dide ther labour
 To vndermyne round aboute the tour.
- Of which[e] thing whan Gaulteer gan take heed, 2756
 This message he sente onto the town,
 Nat of trouthe, but feynynгли for dreed,
 Made promys be fals collusioun
 For to make ful restitucioun 2760
 Of ther fredamys, as thei list devise;
 Sent hem out [oon] Guyllamyn Dassise,
 Which to the cite was preuid vttir foo;
 Hadde afforn[e] doon hem gret damage. 2764
 With Guillamyn to them he sent also
 His sone and heir to stynte al ther rage, —
 Wers than his fadir of wil and of corage.
 Bothe attonis wer hangid anon riht 2768
 Tofor the paleis in Gaulteres siht.
- Another also, that callid was Herry,
 Which hadde afforn[e] youe instruccioun
 Vnto Gaulteer and was eek gret enmy 2772
 To steren hym ageyn that noble town,
 Gynner and ground of ther dyuisioun, —
 Which tofor Gaulteer, his iugement to shewe,
With sharp[e] suerdis he was al to-hewe. 2776
- Thexecucioun doon upon thes thre
 In Tuscan born, the rancour did appese*
 Of Florentynes, to staunche the[r] cruelte
 Ageyn Gaulteer, and to his lyff gret ese. 2780
 He glad tescape out of his disese,
 Fledde away in ful secre wise,
 The town restorid ageyn to *per* franchise.
- Thus he loste be his insolence 2784
 Al his poweer and domynacioun
 Bothe of Tuscan and also of Florence;
- His friends were glad to flee by a small postern;
- but Gautier promised to restore the liberties of the town and sent out one William d'Assise,
- an enemy of the city, and his own son, who was even worse than his father. Both were immediately hanged before the palace.
- Another enemy of the town, called Herry, who had incited Gaultier to new outrages, was cut in pieces with swords.
- After these three were executed the anger of the Florentines lessened, and Gaultier managed to escape.
- Thus by his insolence he lost all his power.

2762. oon] *om.* J.

2763. vttir] a gret H, R 3, a great P.

2765. With] off H — he sent to them J. 2767. 2nd of] or H.

2773. steren] restoren H. 2778. appese] espie B, J.

- He went to King John of France, And as myn auctour maketh mencion, Fro Lombardie he is descendid down, 2788
Drouh to kyng Iohn regnyng tho in France,
And of berthe ful nih of alliaunce.
- and was at the battle of Poitiers when John was taken prisoner. He fled like a coward As I fynde he was on that partie With kyng Iohn, this Gaulteer, lik a kniht; 2792
Whan that the kyng with al his cheualrie
Was take hymself, his lordis put to fliht,
Into Ingland lad aftir anon riht, —
The saide Gaulteer, hauyng no reward 2796
To his disworshep, * fledde lik a coward.
- and, falling into the hands of some Lombard soldiers, was slain by a certain Florentine. Mette in his fliht with dyuers soudiours Of Lombardie abidyng with kyng Iohn, Which that tyme as brigavntis & pillours 2800
Took this Gaulteer, ledde hym foorth anon, —
His force, his corage, his herte was agon:
Of aenture a certeyn Florentyn
Smet of his hed; this was his fatal fyn. 2804

[Off Philip Cathenoise born of lowe birthe
cam to grete estat / & aftir she hir son
& doughtir were brent.]¹

Next in order, weeping and trembling, came Philipot Cathenoise.

- B**ESPREYNT with teres, & [with] a woful
noise, [p. 441]
Tofor Bochas quakyng in sorwe & dred,
Next in ordre cam Phelipp Cathenoise,
Poore of degre, born of lough kynreede, 2808
Which roos aftir to gret estat in deede.
Gan with gret sorwe a compleynt ful mortall,
Ceriousli to telle hir* woful fall.
- Although she rose to high estate, she was born of low bed, and Bochas was unwilling to spend much time on her story. Touchyng hir berthe, dirk was hir lynage, 2812
Of poore bed[de] born on outhere side;
Bochas was loth to spende gret langage
On hir historie, long theron tabide,
Purposed hym nothyng for to hide 2816
Of the substauce, but telle al the grete,
And superfluite of the remnant lete.

2797. disworshep] worshep B, J — lik] as H.

2807. Philip J, R 3, P.

2811. hir] the B, his J. 2818. remnant] tyraunt H.

¹ MS. J. leaf 181 recto.

- Which was rehersed to hym in his youthe
 Whan he was toward Robert of Cicile, 2820
 Kyng of Iherusalem, the stori is nat kouth;
 Yit in his book he list it to compile
 And it rehearse be ful souereyn stile,
 Lik in that court as it was [to] hym told 2824
 Bi oon Bulgar clad in a slaueyn old.
- The saide Bulgar was a maryneer,
 With whom also was a Calabrien
 Callid Constantyn, which ful many a yeer 2828
 Trauailled hadde & sondry thynges seen
 In dyuers contres ther he hadde been.
 Mong other thinges seyn in ther daies olde,
 This was a stori which[e] Bulgar tolde. 2832
- Duk of Calabre, Robert be his name,
 Bi his fadir Charlis, the myhti kyng,
 Hadde in comaundement, his stori seith þe same,
 Geyn Frederik to make a strong ridyng; 2836
 Which be force proudli vsurping,
 Took upon hym to be lord of that ile,
 Which callid was the kyngdam of Cicile.
- Drepanne in soth[e] callid was the toun 2840
 Wher Duk Robert his pauylouns pihte,
 Redi armyd, thoruh his hih renoun
 Geyn Frederik for that* lond to fihte 2844
 And withstonde hym pleyntly yif he myhte.
 And so befill, the morwe tofor þprime
 The dukis wiff of chilyng bood hir tyme.
- Violaunt men dide that ladi call,
 In hir tyme a famous gret duchesse; 2848
 Destitut of other women all,
 Whan hir child was born in that distresse,
 To yiue it souke, the stori doth expresse,
 Saue fro* myscheeff Philipot was brouht neer, 2852
 Of Cathenoise, the dukis cheef lauendeer.
- Bi a fisshere, which was hir husbonde,
 A child she hadde, lyuyng be ther trauaile, whose husband was a fisherman.

2824. to] *om.* H, R 3.

2840. Depranum P.

2843. that] the B, J, P.

2852. Saue] And H — fro] for B, J, H 5, P, R 3 — Philipot] Philip P.

2835. his] the J.

2841. Robert] Roger P.

2845. befor H, before J.

- Thus Philipot
became nurse
to the
Duchess, and
lived in luxury;
- Which fro the se onto the court be londe 2856
Day be day caried vitaile.
And in this caas, because it myhte auaille,
Philipot was brouht, in this gret streihtnesse,
To be norice onto the duchesse. 2860
- and accom-
panied her
mistress
to Naples,
where the
child died.
- Wher she was cherished aftir hir desirs,
Ech thyng reedi whan that euer she sente.
With the duchesse mong other chaumberers
Into Naples I fynde that she wente, 2864
Til Antropos, froward of entente,
Made of this child, ther is no mor to seyne,
The lyues threed[e] for to breke in tweyne.
- One Raymond
of Champagne,
King Charles'
chief cook, had
once bought
an Ethiopian
child from
a pirate and
- With kyng Charlis, of whom I spak toforn, 2868
As myn auctour remembrith in his book,
Was oon Raymond of Chaumpayne born,
Which with the kyng was callid maister cook.
And on a day his iourne he took 2872
Toward the se; a pirat, as I fynde,
Sold hym a child which was born in Ynde.
- made him a
Christian and
taught him to
be a master
cook.
- Lik Ethiopiens was his colour;
For whom this cook Raymond hath deuysed, 2876
Be his notable [&] dilligent labour,
Made hym cristene; & so he was baptised;
Gaff hym his* name, & hath also practised
Hym to promoote, that he vpon hym took 2880
Bi his doctryne to be maister cook;
- After Raymond
became a
knight, the
Ethiopian was
made lord of
the king's
wardrobe, and
although he
was black,
Philipot, whose
husband had
died, married
him.
- For he soone afftir took the ordre of kniht.
The Ethiopien wex a good officeer,
Gat suich grace in the kyngis siht, 2884
To be aboute hym [was brouht up] mor neer;
Be processe he was maad wardropeer;
And thouth he was blak of his visage,
To Cathenoise was ioyned in mariage. 2888
- He grew bold
and asked the
king to knight
him, which
the king did.
- Wex malapert, and of presumpcioun [p. 442]
To be maad kniht the kyng he gan requere,
Which of fredam and gret affecciou
Is condescendid to graunten his praiere. 2892
But to declare pleynli the maneere,

2859. Philip P. 2867. in] on H, J, R 3, H 5.

2872. his] this J, P. 2875. Ethiopes H.

2877. &] om. J. 2878. cristened J. 2879. his] the B, J.

2885. was brouht up] om. P, J. 2887. blak] om. H.

- In this tyme Violaunt the duchesse,
Affor remembred, deide of seeknesse.
- Aftir whos deth, the book doth certefie,
How Duk Robert of Naples the cite
Weddid a ladi that callid was Sansie,
To whom Philipot, as fill to hir degre,
With dilligence and gret humylite
To plesen hire did so hir deueer,
That of hir counsail ther was non so neer.
- Euere redi at hir comaundement,
Wrouhte atires plesaunt of deliht,
With holsum watres that wer redolent
To make hir skyn bi wasshyng soote & whiht,
Made confecciouns to serue hir appetiht.
Bi hir husbonde, the stori who list see,
The same Philipot hadde childre thre.
- She was kunnyng & of hir port prudent;
Chose be fauour for to be maistresse
To faire Iane, yong and innocent,
Which douhtir was to the gret duchesse
Of Calabre; and ferthermor texpresse,
Hir husbonde Thethiopian with-al
Of Charlis houshold was maad senescall.
- “O Lord!” quod Bochas, spak of hih disdeyn,
“What meueth this Fortune for to make cheere,
With hir fauour to reise up a foreyn
Vpon hir wheel, with brihte fethres cleere;
But of custum it is ay hir maneere
Fairest tappeere with cheer and contenance,
Whan she wil brynge a man vnto myschaunce.
- For he that was a boy the laste day,
An Ethiopien broun and horrible of siht,
And afor-tyme in the kechyn lay
Among the pottis with baudi cote aniht,
Now [he] of neue hath* take the ordre of kniht,
With kyng Charlis now is he senescall:
Swich sodeyn clymyng axeth a sodeyn fall.”

2896 At this time
Violanta died,
and Duke
Robert married
a lady called
Sancia, with
whom Philipot
soon became
very intimate.

2900

2904

2908 Philipot had
three children,

2912

2916

2920

2924

2928

and as she
was prudent
and knowing
she became
governess of
Jane, daughter
of the Duchess
of Calabria.
The Ethiopian
was made
seneschal of
Charles'
household.

“O Lord,”
said Bochas,
“why should
Fortune so
lift up an
alien, especially
an ugly,

brown
Ethiopian,
who once lay
among the
pots in the
kitchen!
Such sudden
climbing asks
a sudden fall.”

2894. this] his H. 2896. doth] om. H.

2897. Robert] Roger P.

2901. hir] corrected from his to hir B. 2906. wasshyn H.

2918. for] om. H, R 3. 2923. vnto] in to H.

2928. he] om. J — hath] haue B.

- He and Philipot
his wife rose
to great wealth,
and their sons
made stately
marriages and
became knights.
But their
father died at
the height of
his prosperity
and had a
great funeral.
Thus Fortune
can change.
The eldest
son also died,
and the second
son left his
books to take
his father's
place.
- Philipot's
welfare was
in part eclipsed;
but as the
sun shines
brightest after
a rain, she
too rose to
still greater
glory.
- Jane, who
was not
above criticism,
married king
Andreas of
Hungary,
- and for
a large
bribe and by
great labour
had Philipot's
son Robert
made governor
of Sicily.
- The Sicilians
were indignant.
- He and Philipot, his wiff, fro pouerte
Been enhaunsid and rise to gret richesse; 2932
Tweyne of ther sonis statli married bee;
And for fauour mor than worthynesse
Took ordre of kniht; & in his most hihnesse
Ther fader deide, whos feeste funerall 2936
Was solemnised and holde ful roiall.
- Thus can Fortune chaungen as the moone,
Hir brihte face dirked with a skie:
His eldest sone deide aftir soone; 2940
The secounde lefft up his clergie,
To be maad kniht gan hymself applie,
Stede of his fader, pleynli as I reede,
In his offis be fauour to succede. 2944
- Thus be processe fro Philipot anon riht,
Deth of hir husbonde & [of] hir sonis tweyne,
Fortune in parti eclipsed hath the liht
Of hir weelfare & gan at hir disdeyne. 2948
Yit euene lik, as whan that it doth reyne,
Phebus aftir sheweth mor cleernesse,
So she fro trouble roos to mor noblesse.
- I meene as thus, rehersing no vertu 2952
In hir persone that men koude espie,
But onli this, be title of this issu:
Whan Charlis douhtir Iane on that partie
Was to the kyng weddid of Hungrie, 2956
Callid Andree, a man of gret corage,
His saide wiff but riht tendre of age,
- The same Iane, nat al withoute vice,
As is rehersed sumwhat be myn auctour, 2960
To whom Philipot whilom was* norice,
As ye haue herd, and be ful gret labour
Of saide Iane, Robert made gouernour,
Sone of Philipot, for a gret reward, 2964
Made of Scicile & of that lond stiward.
- This fauour doon to Philipot Cathenoise
Caused in that lond gret indignacioun,
Whos douhtres weddyng caused eek gret noise, 2968

2934. than] þan for H. 2937. holde] kept H.
2945. Phillippe P. 2951. noblesse] gladnesse H.
2957. Andreas P. 2958. His saide] he seid his J.
2959. Stanza repeated H. 2961. was whilom B.

- Married to Charlis the gret erl of Marchoun,
 Which gaff to folk gret occasioun
 To deeme amys aboute in ech contre,
 That al that lond was gouerned be tho thre, 2972
- Be queen Iane and Philipot Cathenoise [p. 443]
 And saide Robert, stiward of Cicile,
 Sone to Philipot; this was the comoun voice: —
 The queen and Robert be ther sotil wile 2976
 Hadde of assent vsed a long[e] while
 The hatful synne of auout[e]rie,—
 Roos in Cicile & went up to Hungrie.
- For queen Iane began no maner thing 2980
 But Cathenoise assentid wer therto;
 Thexecucioun and fulli the werking
 Brouht to conclusioun, be Robert al was do.
 And in this title roos a stryf also, 2984
 A disclaundrous and a froward discord
 Atween the queen & hym that was hir lord.
- Hard to procede upon suspecioun,
 Sclaundre is swift, lihtli taketh his fliht; 2988
 For which men sholde eschewe thoccasioun
 Of fame and noise, & euery maner wiht
 Bi prouidence remembre in his forsiht,
 Whan the report is thoruh a lond Ironne, 2992
 Hard is to stynte it whan it is begonne.
- Withstonde principles, occasiouns to declyne,
 List vnwarli ther folwe gret damage;
 To late kometh the salue and medecyne 2996
 To festrid soris whan thei be incurable.
 And in caas verray resemblable,
 Teschewe slaundre list nat for to spare,
 May nat failen to fallen in the snare. 3000
- Thus for a tyme the sclaundre was kept cloos,
 Al-be-it so it did a while abide,
 Another mischeef than* pitousli aroos,
 Which afftirward spradde abrood ful wide: 3004
 Auoutrye to moordre is a guide, —
 Set at a preeff, myn auctour doth recorde,
 The kyng Andree was stranglid with a corde.

Philipot's daughter then married the earl of Marcon, which increased her power.

It was common gossip that Robert and Queen Jane had long been committing adultery.

The news reached Hungary, and there was strife between the king and queen.

Slander travels swiftly and, once begun, is hard to stop;

so it is better not to give occasion for it: salve comes too late when a sore is festered and incurable.

For a time the scandal was suppressed; but soon another mischief arose: King Andreas was murdered.

2971. deeme] don H.

3003. than] ful B, J, P, H 5, om. R 3.

- Hugh, Earl of
Avelino, under-
took to punish
the crime; and
- Out of his chaumbre reised a gret heilte 3008
Bi a coniected fals conspiracioun,
He was entreted, brouht down be a sleiht,
Afftir stranglid, as maad is mencioniun.
Whos deth to pun[i]she be commyssioun, 3012
Huhe Erl of Auelyn be a patent large
To be iuge took on hym the charge.
- Philipot, her
son and her
daughter, were
found guilty
and burnt at
the stake.
- Of this moordre roos up a gret noise,
Be evidencis ful abhomynable, 3016
Philipot [I]callid Cathenoise,
Hir sone, hir douhtir, that thei wer coupable;
Doom was youe be iuges ful notable;
And to conclude shortli ther iugement, 3020
With cheynis bounde to stakis thei wer brent.

[Lenvoye.]

- This tragedie
tells the evils
of presumption:
no one is more
cruel than a
beggar who
rises to domi-
nation.
- T**HIS tragedie afforn rehersed heer
Tellith the damages of *presumpcioun*,
Bexperience declaryng þe maneer, 3024
Whan beggers rise to domynacioun,
Is non so dreedful execucioun
Of cruelte, yif it be weel souht,
Than of such oon that *cam* up of nouht. 3028
- Philipot was
at first a simple
launderess; but
when she came
to estate she
never considered
her birth.
- Record on Philipot, that *with* humble cheer
Bi sodeyn faouur and supportacioun,
Which was tofor a symple smal lauendeer
Of no valu nor reputacioun, 3032
Be Fortunys gery mutacioun,
Shad out hir malis, testat whan she was brouht,
List nat *considre* how she *cam* up of nouht.
- Where is
there more
scornful pride
or seeking of
evil company or
intriguing than
among people
who rise
out of nothing?
- Wher mor disdeyn or wher is mor daungeer, 3036
Or mor froward comunycacioun,
Mor vengable venym doth appeere,
Nor mor sleihti fals supplantacioun,
Nor mor conspired vnwar collusioun, 3040
Nor vndermynyng doon couertli & wrouht,
Than of such folk that komen up of nouht?

3008. heilte] liht H. 3015. this] his H.
3017. Icallid] that called was P, callid H, J.
3027. souht] I sought J, out sought P.
3029. on] of H, R 3, H 5 — Philip P.

Fortunys chaunges & meeuynges circuleer, With hir most stormy transmutacioun,	3044	Fortune often sets up the vicious and puts down the virtuous.
Now oon set up ful hih in hir chaieer, Enhaunceth vicious, vertuous she put doun; Record on Philipot, whos venymous tresoun Compassid afforn[e] in hir secre thouht,	3048	
The deede brak out, whan she cam up of nouht.		
Noble Princis, with <i>your</i> briht eien cleer Aduertiseth in your discrecioun, That no flaterer com in <i>your</i> court to neer	3052	Noble Princes, remember this tragedy and the treason done by false flatterers who came up of nouht!
Be no fraude of fals decepcioun, Alwey remembryng afforn in <i>your</i> resoun On this tragedie, and on the tresoun wrouht Bi fals flaterers that cam up of nouht.	3056	

[How kyng Sausys was slayn by his Cosyn whiche
was brothir to the kyng of Arrogan.] ¹

T HE tyme kam that of his [gret] trauaile [p. 444] Bochas dempte, holdyng for þe beste, This noble poete of Florence & Itaile, To make his penne a while for to reste,	3060	Bochas now thought to rest a while from his labour, so he shut up his book in a chest; but before he could turn the key,
Closed his book &* shette it in his cheste; But or he mihte spere it with the keie, Kam thre princis and meekli gan hym preye, Amongis othre remembrid in his book Ther greuauces breeffi to declare.	3064	three kings came and prayed him to remember their grievances. Of compassion he could not refuse, and with their stories he made an end of the Fall of Princes.
Wherwith Bochas gan cast up his look, And of compassioun beheeld her pitous fare, Thouhte he wolde for no slouthe spare To ther requestis goodli condescende, And of his book so to make an eende.	3068	
And he gan first reherse be wrytyng, And his compleynt ful pitousli he made, Touchyng the fall[e] of the grete kyng Icallid Sause, which his soioir hade, The place namyd was Astrosiade;	3072	The first was Sancho, who lived in the Balearic Isles.

3045. hir] his H, the J. 3047. on] of H, R 3.

3061. &] to B, R 3, H 5.

3074. Sause] Sautius P—hade] made H.

3075. was] om. H, R 3.

¹ MS. J. leaf 182 verso.

- And, as he writ, a litil ther beside 3076
Was a smal isle callid Gemaside.
- His kingdom was called Majorca, and there he lived in peace,
Bothe thes isles togidre knet in oon,
Wher Sausis hadde his domynacioun,
Lyuung in pes; enmy hadde he non; 3080
In long quiete heeld pocessioun.
Whos kyngdam hool, as maad is menciouun,
In that vulgar, myn auctour writ þe same,
Of Malliogres pleyntli bar þe name. 3084
- Ther is also another smaller isle*
Callid Maillorge; & of bothe tweyne
The seid[c] kyng was lord a gret[c] while,
Keeping his stat notable and souereyne. 3088
Hauyng a cosyn, gan at hym disceyne,
Which brother was, as maad is menciouun,
Vnto the kyng that tyme of Arragoun.
- It is said that in these isles slings for casting stones in battle were first invented.
In thes isles, remembrid be writyngis, 3092
Whan the people went into bataile,
Was the vsage founde up first of slyngis,
With cast of stoon ther enmyes to assaile; 3096
Thei hadde of shot non othir apparaile
In that tyme; arblast nouthur bowe
Parauenture was tho but litil knowe.
- Finally Sancho's cousin came down from Spain with an army and took away his kingdom and
Alle thes contres wer callid but o lond,
Wher that Sausis heeld pocessioun, 3100
Til his cosyn with strong & myhti hond
[And] with gret power sodenli cam down;
Brouhte people out of Arragoun,
Fill on kyng Sausis, feeble in his diffence, 3104
Gat that kyndam be knihtli violence.
- smote off his head. Though they were nearly related, no courtesy was shewn that day.
The ballaunce was nat of euene peis
Atween thes cosyns, who that list take heed;
For in his conquest this Arogonieis 3108
Of cruelte bad smyten of the hed
Of kyng Sausis, quakyng in his dreed.
Thouh it stood so thei wer nih, of allie,
Ther was that day shewed no curteisie. 3112

3077. was] with H — Emacide P. 3079. Sautius (*through-*
out) P. 3085. isle] Islee B. 3086. Maiora P.
3098. was tho but] þat tyme was H. 3100. that] om. P.
3108. this] the J — Aragonieise H, Arageneyis R 3, Arragoneys
J, Arrogoneys P.

[How Lowes kyng of Jerusalem & Cecile was put
doun.]¹

AFFTIR this storie told in woordes fewe,
 And of kyng Sausis slayn be tyrannye,
Per cam a prince, & *gan* his face shewe,
 Callid Lowis lord of Trynacrye, 3116
 The same isle [w]as in that partie
 Callid Cicane, the stori tellith thus,
 Aftir the name of kyng Siculus.
 Trynacrye, a contre merueillous, 3120
 Took first his name of famous hilles thre:
 The cheeff of hem is callid Pellorus,
 The next Pachynvs,* the thridde Lillibe,
 Nat fer from Ethna the saide hille[s] be, 3124
 Beside a se ful pereilous and ille,
 With too daungeeris Karibdis and eek Scille.
 This saide Lowys, kyng of Iherusalem
 And of Sicile, the book maketh mencionn, 3128
 Which was enchasid & put out of his rewme
 Bi another Lowis and put doun,
 Eendid in pouert, for short conclusioun.
 This laste Lowis of pite did hym grace, 3132
 Til he deide to haue a duellyng place.

Louis, lord of
Trinacria, or
Sicania, which
was named
after King
Siculus, a

wonderful
country with
three famous
hills, Pelorum,
Pachynum,
and Lily-
baeum, not
far from Etna,

was chased out
of his realm
and put down
by another
Louis, who had
at least the
grace to give
him a dwelling
place till he
died.

[How kyng John of fraunce at Peyters was take
prisonere by Prynce Edward & brouzt in to
Englond.]²

NEXT of alle and laste of euerichon,
 Cursyng Fortune with al hir variaunce,
 Makyng his compleynt to Bochas, *cam* Kyng Iohn:
 Tolde his mischeeff, how he was take in France 3137
 Bi Prince Edward, for al his gret puissance;
 And aftir that, with strong & myhti hond,
 He was fro Peiteres brouht into Englond. 3140
 Afforn destroied his castellis & his touns, [p. 445]
 And ouerthrowen manli in bataile, 7 from Poitiers
 to Englond.

Last of all
came King
John of France,
cursing Fortune
and all her
variance. He
told Bochas
how Prince
Edward took
him prisoner
in France
and sent him

3117. was] as P, H 5, om. J. 3118. Sicania P.
 3123. Pachynvs] Pathmvs B, J, Pachmus H, Pachynvs R 3,
 Pachinus P. 3126. eek] om. H.
 3142. ouerthrowen] ovircomen H, ouercomen R 3, ovyrcome H 5.

¹ MS. J. leaf 182 verso.

² MS. J. leaf 182 verso.

- His princes
were slayn, and
the heaps of
dead were
searched and
spoiled of plate
and mail. His princis slayn, ther baueres nor penouns
Nor brode standardis mihte hem nat auaille; 3144
The tras out souht, spoiled of plate & maile.
Maugre his miht kyng Iohn was prisoneer,
In Ingland aftir abood ful many a yeer,
- John remained
in England
many a year. Set aftirward onto ful gret raunsoun; 3148
The worthi slay[e]n on the Frenssh partie.
The same tyme in Brutis* Albioun
Ther floured in soth noblesse of cheualrie,
Hihe prowessse* and prudent pollicie; 3152
Mars and Mercurie aboue ech nacioun
Gouerned that tyme Brutis* Albioun.
- Mars, their
patron in
battle, and
Minerva gave
them influence
to excel in
prudence and
learning. Mars for kniithod, ther patroun in bataille,
And Mynerua gaff hem influence, 3156
Meynt with the brihtnesse of shyning plate & maile,
To floure in clergie and in hih prudence,
That Prince Edward be marcial violence,
That day on lyue oon the beste kniht, 3160
Brouht hom King Iohn, maugre al his miht.
- Bochas
favoured John
and France,
and striving
to belittle the
famous chivalry
of Englishmen,
he left spear
and shield and
fought with pen
and ink. Thouh Bochas yaff hym fauour bi langage,
His herte enclyned onto that partie,
Which onto hym was but smal auantage: 3164
Woord is but wynd brouht in be envie.
For to hyndre the famous cheualrie
Of Inglissh-men, ful narwe he gan hym thinke,
Lefft spere and sheeld[e], fauht with penne & inke.
- Although
he was a
great poet he
gave no mortal
wound: his
partial writing
rebounded to
his shame. —
blaming King
John because
he was taken
by English-
men, whom he
disparaged! Thouh seide Bochas floured in poetrie, 3169
His parcial writyng gaf no mortal wounde;
Kauht a quarel in his malencolie,
Which to his shame did aftirward rebounde, 3172
In conclusioun, lik as it was founde,
Ageyn King Iohn a quarell gan to make,
Cause that he wolde of Inglissh-men be take.
- Heeld hem but smal of reputacioun 3176
In his report, men may his writing see;

3145. tras] cas H. 3148. onto] to J.

3150. Brutis] Brutus B, Brutes J, P. 3151. of] and J.

3152. Hihe prowessse] With hih prudence B, J.

3154. Brutus B, J. 3155. ther] the H.

3157. Meynt with the brihtnesse] with þe brihtnesse meynt H
— the] om. J, P.

3158. Tō] þe H. 3168. fauht] & faught H 5.

3175. Cause] by cause H, be cause R 3.

- His fantasie nor his oppynioun
 Stood in that caas of non auctorite:
 Ther kyng was take; ther knihtis dide flee; 3180
 Wher was Bochas to helpe at such a neede?
 Sauff *with* his penne he made no man to bleede.
- Of rihtwisnesse euery cronicleer
 Sholde in his writyng make non excepcioun; 3184
 Indifferentli conueie his mateere;
 Nat be parcial of non affecciou,
 But yiue the thank of marcial guerdoun,
 His stile in ordre so egali obserued, 3188
 To euery parti as thei haue disserued.
- Laude of Kyng Iohn was that he abood,
 In that he quit hym lik a manli kniht;
 His lordes slay[e]n; *somme* away thei rood; 3192
 Most of his meyne took hem to the fliht.
 This iourne take for Kyng Edwardis riht;
 The feeld I-wonne; hath this in memorie:
 Treuthis title hath gladli the victorie. 3196
- Of Kyng Iohn what sholde I write more?
 Brouht to this lond with othir prisoneeris,
 Vpon which the rewm compleyned sore.
 Bi rehersaile of old cronicleeris, 3200
 Deied in Ingland; withynne a fewe yeeris
 Lad hom ageyn; afftir ther writyngis,
 Lyf at Seyn[t] Denys with othir worthi kingis.

¶ Lenvoye.

- OFF Bochas book the laste tragedie 3204
 Compendiousli put *in remembrance*,
 How Prince Edward *with* his cheualrie
 Fauht at Peiteres with King Iohn of France;
 And thoruh his mihti marcial puissaunce 3208
 Grounded his quarel upon his fadres riht,
 Took hym prisoneer ful lik a manli kniht.
- Bi collusioun King Iohn did occupie,
 Set out of ordre the roial alliaunce; 3212
 Sceptre, crowne, *with* al the regalie

3180. 2nd ther] his H, R 3, hys H 5. 3195. hath] have H, P.
 3200. Cronyculeres J.

- conveyed down
to him by
lineal descent.
- Was down descendid to Edward in substaunce,
Conueied the branchis be lyneal concordauce,
For which[e] title groundid upon riht, 3216
Prince Edward fauht ful lik a manli kniht.
- And in token
that he was
in the riht
God gave
Edward victory.
- His cleym, his quarel mor to fortiefie,
In tokne that God his quarel wolde auauce,
Disconfiture was maad on that partie, 3220
Vpon King Iohn be violent vttraunce,
An heuenli signe be influent purueiaunce
Sent from aboue to shewe Edwardis riht,
For which the Prince fauht lik a manli kniht. 3224
- Noble Princes,
weigh this
matter justly
in balance;
there is no
variance in
honest judges:
- Noble Princis, your hertis doth applie [p. 446]
Iustli to weie this mateer in ballaunce.
Alle thynges peised, ye may it nat denye,
Yiff ye considre euery circumstaunce, 3228
In rihtful iuges may be no variaunce:
The feeld darreynd, deemeth who hath riht,
For which Prince Edward fauht lik a manli kniht.
- a thing
committed to
God allows of
no controversy;
and this is
the plight in
which France
stood: her
king was finely
taken at
Poitiers by
Prince Edward.
- A thyng bassent[e] put in iupartie 3232
And commytted to Goddis ordenaunce,
Ther may been afftir no contrauersie
Atween parties, quarelis nor distaunce,
Who shal reioisshe; and in this caas stood France: 3236
Fyn* take at Peiteres, declaryng who hath riht;
For which Prince Edward fauht lik a manli kniht.

3218. H 5 omits to 3478 (one leaf missing between 180 and 181).

3232. iupartie] memorye H, memory R 3.

3234. Contravesye H.

3237. Fyn] Syn B, Sith P—take] om. P, J.

3238. This line is followed in H by the 14th stanza of the Envoy,
after which comes the Chapitle of Fortune.

¶ Finis libri Bochasij.

A chapitle of Fortune compild howe she hath hir
quytt to al wordly pepill.¹

- L** AT folk of wisdam considre in þer wit,
Gadre up, a-somme* & counte in þer resoun, 3240
To all estatis hou Fortune hath hir quit,
To popis, prelatis, gynne first in Roome toun,
To cardynalis most souereyn of renoun, —
Whan thei sat hiest, koude hem nat diffende 3244
Ageyn Fortune bi no prouisioun;
But with a tourn she made hem to descende.
- Afftir in ordre cal to remembrance
Thestat imperial of famous emperours, 3248
Which as Appollo thoruh ther mihti puissaunce
Ther fame up blowe to Iubiteris tours,
And forget nat thes olde conquerours
Aboue Mercurye cast hem to assende, 3252
Til that Fortune with hir froward shours
Most sodenli made hem to descende.
- Kynges, princis of dyuers regiouns,
In Asie, Europe, Affrik & Cartage, 3256
Of Ethiopie the marcial champiouns,
Monstres of Ynde, hidous of visage,
Athlas, Hercules, in ther most furious rage,
Ageyn whos myht no man koude hym diffende, —
What folwed aftir? From ther hiest stage 3261
Fortune vnwarli made hem to descende.
- Preestis, prelatis and weel-fed fat parsownis,
Richeli auanced, and clerkis of degre, — 3264
Rekne up religious, with al ther brode crownis,
And patriarkes that haue gret souereynute, —
Bisshoppis, abbottis confermed in ther see,
Seculeer chanouns, with many gret prebende; 3268
Behold of Fortune the mutabilite,
How sodenli she made hem to descende.
- Let folk consider how Fortune behaves toward all estates: when they sit highest, with a turn of her wheel she makes them descend.
- Popes, cardinals, emperors, old conquerors — all were made suddenly to fall.
- Kings, princes of many lands and martial champions cast down from their highest stage.
- Priests, prelates, and well-fed parsons, monks and patriarchs, bishops, abbots and canons, with many a fat prebend, have also fallen.

3239. considren of wisdam H.

3240. a-somme] a sonne B, a sonne R 3.

3241. Fortune] she H, R 3. 3242. gynne] gan H.

3258. Monstres] Monstrous R 3. 3263. fed] om. R 3.

3264. clerkis] cherlys H. 3265. al] om. H.

¹ "Here Bochas makith a rehersaile how fortune hath made high estates vnwarly to descende." MS. J. leaf 183 verso. *This chapter is collated with H, J, R 3 and H 5 (from line 3478).*

- There are many conditions of men, but Fortune causes them all to rise or descende at her will. Al that is write, is write to our doctrine:
 Oon courbith lowe, another goth upriht; 3272
 Summe be vicious, summe in vertu shyne;
 Phebus now clipsid, somtyme his bemys briht,
 Sumtyme cloudi, sumtyme a sterry niht;
 Sum folk appeire, summe doon amende, 3276
 Shewe off Fortune the power & the myht:
 Oon goth upward, another doth descende.
- Some are virtuous, others perversely wilful, some evil, some stable in Christ; but in spite of the world Fortune rules them all — Sum man hooly encreseth in vertu,
 A-nother rekles, of froward wilfulness; 3280
 Oon is parfit and stable in Crist Iesu,
 A-nother braideth upon frowardnesse;
 Oon encreseth with tresour & richesse, —
 Who list thryue, to labour must entende, — 3284
 Maugre the world, Fortunis doubilnesse
 Doth oon arise, another to discende.
- the industrious and the idle, the wasters and the thrifty. Oon is besi and set al his labour
 Erli tarise his good to multeplic; 3288
 Another spendeth, & is a gret wastour;
 Sum tre is bareyn, sum doth fructefie;
 Oon kan seyn soth, another can weel lie;
 Oon kan gadre, another kan dispende, — 3292
 Vnto Fortune this mateer doth applie:
 She maketh oon rise, a-nother to dissende.
- Avoid the weed, and take the corn of virtue, as reason teaches; and the lesson of this book is that all men rise or fall on Fortune's wheel. Al thes mateeres rehersed here to forne,*
 Of which this book maketh mencion, 3296
 Voideth the weed, of vertu tak the corn,
 As resoun techeth in your discrecioun.
 And for to sette a short conclusioun,
 In a breeff somme this book to comprehende: 3300
 Fortunis wheel bi reuolucioun
 Doth oon clymbe up, another to discende.

3271. 1st write] writen H. 3273. vertu] vertues H.
 3279. man] men H. 3286. arise] to rise R 3.
 3290. sum] som frute H.
 3295. rehersed here toforne] conbynd into oon B, J.
 3297. taketh J, takith H. 3298. techeth] om. R 3.

[¶ A lenvoye compyled vpon the book wryten by the
translatour specially direct to hym that causyd
the translacioun & secundely to alle othir it
shal seen.]¹

<p>RYGHTE reuerent Prynce, <i>with</i> support of your grace, By your comaundement as I vndirtook With dredful herte, pale of cheer and face, I haue a-complysshed translacioun of your book; In which labour myn hand ful offte quook, My penne also troublid with ygnoraunce Lyst myn emprise wer nat to your plesaunce.</p>	<p>3304</p> <p>3308</p>	<p>Right reverent Prince, I have finished translating your book. My hand often trembled, and my pen was troubled lest my work were not to your pleasure.</p>
<p>Off ryght considred, of trouthe and equite, I nat expert nor stuffyd with language, Seyn howh that Ynglyssh in ryme hath skarsete, How I also was ronne ferre in age, Nat quyk, but rude and dul of my corage, Off no presumpcioun, but atwix hope and drede To obeye your byddyng took on* me to procede.</p>	<p>3312</p> <p>3316</p>	<p>For I am not skilled in language, and there is a lack of rhyming words in English, and I was far run in age and dull of heart when I began.</p>
<p>Hope with glad chere gaff me greet counfort, Off trust I shulde agreeen your noblesse; But tho cam dred, contraryous of repoort, Gan manace and frowardly expresse, Geyn me alleggyng vnkonnynge and dulnesse, — Seyde for his part, by argumentys stronge, I was not able for to vndirfonge</p>	<p>3320</p>	<p>Hope gave me comfort that I shuld please your noblesse, and then came Dread alleging ignorance and dulness against me.</p>
<p>This seid emprise to performe & contvne; The profunde processe was so poetical, Entirmedlyd with chaunges of fortune And straunge materys that were hystoryal, Towchyng estatys that hadde a sodeyn fal; The Frenssh vnkouth compendiously compyled, To which language my tounge was nat affyled.</p>	<p>3324</p> <p>3328</p>	<p>The matter was inter- mingled of changes of Fortune and strange historical things, and the French difficult; and for French my tongue was not polished.</p>
<p>Dreed and vnkonnynge beeyng of assent Made ageyn me a daungerous obstacle, For tacomplysshe your comaundement, Stondyng fer of fro Tullyvs habitacle:</p>	<p>3332</p>	<p>Dread and lack of skill were dangerous obstacles to my fulfilling your commandment,</p>

3303. Prynce] princes R 3. 3316. on] vpon H 1766.

¹ *The Envoy, together with the heading, is supplied from MS. Harley 1766, leaf 260 verso, collated with R 3 and P.*

- until Hope
again began to
support me. Myn eyen mystyd, and dirked my spectacle,
Tyl hope ageyn gan make[n] his repeyr; 3336
Me to supporte he putte away dyspeyr.
- The vines of
Bacchus were
sered, and
Midas' aureate
liquor and
Juno's well
dried up. I
found no
favour there.
My heart was
heavy, my
purse light. Yit of Bachus seryd wer the vynes,
Off Mygdas touch the aureat lycour,
And of Iuno wellys crystallynes 3340
Wer dried vp; ther fond I no favour:
A thrustlewh accesse cause of my langour,
Noon egal peys, herte hevy and purs lyght,
Which causith poetys syhen at mydnyght. 3344
- But I trust
your liberality
will relieve
me of this
quotidian, and
that a spring
tide of gracious
plenty will
follow. Trustyng ageynward your liberal largesse,
Off this cotidien shal* relevyn me,
Hope hath brought tydyng to recure myn accesse;
Afftir this ebbe of froward skarsete 3348
Shal folwe a spryng flood of gracious plente,
To wasshe a-way be plentevous influence
Al ground ebbys of constreynd indigence.
- With Hope
came Humble
Affection, who
said, you, my
lord, would
have com-
passion on my
old age; and With hope also cam humble affeccoun, 3352
Made a promys vn-to my dul corage,
Seyde, ye, my lord, shulde haue compassyoun,
Off royal pite supporte me in myn age;
Wherof I caught a maner avantage, 3356
Thoughte I wolde rather condyscende
To your desir than your byddyng offende.
- I plucked up
my heart to
obey your
command,
knowing that
although skill
were wanting,
good will might
prevail; for
will has more
might than
force in battle. Tobeye* your precept I plukkyd vp myn herte,
Caste in my conceyt though konnyng did[e] faylle;
By good avys I did also adverte, 3361
How in such caas good wyl myghte moost prevaylle:
Wyl hath more myght than force hath in bataylle;
And with that thought inwardly supprysed, 3364
For to procede I was fully avysed.
- And in excuse
of my rudeness
I ask mercy
for my poor
heart's ease,
that this book
may please
you — to me
the best
reward. But for exskus first of my rudnesse,
To such as lyst haue of this book dissdeyn,
That ye, my lord, of merciful goodnesse, 3368
Whan this translacioun ye haue rad and seyn,
Though it be spoke in wordys bare and pleyn,
I axe mercy for my poore hertys ese,
To me best guerdoun, so that it may yow plese. 3372

3346. cotidian R 3, quotidian P — shal] that H 1766, R 3.

3359. Tobeye] Two obeye H 1766.

3362. prevaylle] avail R 3. 3372. me] be R 3.

- Yiff ought be wryte or seid to your plesauce,
 The thank be yove to your royal noblesse;
 And wher I faylle, atwyteth ygnoraunce,
 Al the diffautys aret to my rudnesse,
 With this annexyd, requeryng of humblesse,
 That alle thoo which shal this making rede,
 For to correcte wher-as they se nede.
- 3376 If aught be said to your pleasure, let the thanks be given to your royal noblesse, and all the faults laid to my lack of skill.
- So it be doon with supportacioun
 Off ther goodnesse to be favourable,
 Nat to pynche of indignacioun,
 Which wer to me verray importable.
 And ye, my lord, for to be mercyable,
 Off your hyh grace my good wyl to considre,
 An hors with foure feet may stoumble among*
 and slydre.
- 3380 Let all correct where they see need, and be favourable to me of their goodness. Even with four feet a horse sometimes slips and stumbles.
- And semblably though I goo nat vp-ryght,
 But stowpe and halte for lak of elloquence,
 Though Omerus hold nat the torche lyght
 To forthre my penne with colours of cadence,
 Nor moral Senek, moost sad of his sentence,
 Gaff me no part of his moralytees,
 Therefore I seye, thus knelyng on my knees:
- 3388 And although I go stooping and halting along, Homer did not hold the torch to further my pen, nor did moral Senek lend me his moralities.
- To alle thoo that shal this book be-holde,
 I them be-seke to haue compassyoun,
 And ther-with-al I prey hem that they wolde
 Favoure the metre and do correccyoun;
 Off gold nor asewr I hadde no foysoun,
 Nor othir colours this processe tenlvmynne,
 Sauff whyte and blak; and they but dully shyne.
- 3396 Therefore I say to all who read this book, have compassion, pass lightly over the metre, and correct where you find need. I had no colours, but only white and black, and they shine but dully.
- I never was aqueynted with Virgyle,
 Nor with [the] sugryd dytees of Omer,
 Nor Dares Frygius with his goldene style,
 Nor with Ovyde, in poetrye moost entieer,
 Nor with the souereyn balladys of Chauceer,*
 Which among alle that euere wer rad or songe,
 Excellyd al othir in our Englyssh tounge.
- 3404 I never had acquaintance with Virgil nor Homer nor Dares nor Ovid, nor with the sovereign ballads of Chaucer, who excelled all other poets of our tongue.
- I can nat been a iuge in this mateer,
 As I conceyve folwyng my fantasye,
 In moral mateer ful notable was Goweer,
- 3408 I am no judge, but Gower and Strode were notable in their philosophy

3386. among] anoon H 1766, R 3. 3389. hold] heeld R 3.
 3405. Chauceer H 1766. 3409. my] in R 3.

- and Richard
Hermit, who
wrote the
Prick of
Conscience;
- yet as the
summer
sun surpasses
all other stars
and as Lucina
chases away
the dark clouds,
ro my master
Chaucer, who
also wrote
tragedies, had
no peer.
- Petrarch and
John Bochas
complained the
Fall of Princes,
how they were
cast down for
their sins, and
so did Chaucer
in the Monk's
Tale.
- But I, who
stand low in
the vale, made
this book by
constraint and
not presumption
— born in a
village called
Lydgate, where
was once a cas-
tle beaten down
in the time
of the Danes.
- I was
never yet at
Cithæron nor
on Mt. Parnas-
sus, where the
nine Muses
dwell; and
where I fail
let Lydgate
bear the blame.
- The subject
matter of this
translation is
in part sad
and needs no
flourishings or
flowers of
rhetoric.
- And so was Stroode in his philosophye,
In parfyt* lyvyng, which passith poysye, 3412
Richard Hermyte, contemplatyff of sentence,
Drowh in Ynglyssh the Prykke of Conscience.
- As the gold-tressyd bryght[e] somyr sonne
Passith othir sterrys with his becmys clere, 3416
And as Lvcyna chaseth skyes donne,
The frosty nyghtes whan Esperus doth appere,
Ryght* so my mayster had[de] nevir pere, —
I mene Chauceer* — in stooryes that he tolde; 3420
And he also wrot tragedyes olde.
- The Fal of Prynces gan pitously compleyne,
As Petrark did, and also Iohn Bochas;
Laureat Fraunceys, poetys bothe tweyne, 3424
Toold how prynces for ther greet trespace
Wer ovirthrowe, rehersyng al the caas,
As Chauceer* did[e] in the Monkys Tale.
But I that stonde lowe down in the vale, 3428
- So greet a book in Ynglyssh to translate,
Did it be constreynt and no presumpcioun.
Born in a vyllage which callyd is Lydgate,
Be old[e] tyme a famous castel toun; 3432
In Danys tyme it was bete doun,
Tyme whan Seynt Edmond, martir, mayde and kyng,
Was slayn at Oxne, be recoord of wrytyng.
- I me excuse, now this book is I-doo, 3436
How I was nevir yit at Cytheroun,
Nor on the mounteyn callyd Pernaso,
Wheer nyne musys haue ther mansyoun.
But to* conclude myn entencioun, 3440
I wyl procede forth with whyte and blak;
And where I faylle let Lydgate ber the lak.
- Off this translacyoun considred the matere,
The processe is in party lamentable; 3444
Wooful clausys of custom they requere,
No rethoryques nor florysshynge delyctable:
Lettrys of compleynt requere colour sable,

3412. parfyt H 1766. 3419. Ryght H 1766.

3420, 27. Chauceer H 1766.

3432. Be] In R 3. 3435. be] om. P.

3440. to] two H 1766.

3446. delitable R 3.

- And tragedyes in especial 3448
 Be rad and songe at feestys funeral.
- This book remembryng of the sodeyn fallys
 Off famous prynces and surquedous pryncessys,
 That wer vnwarly cast from ther royal stallys, 3452
 Which wer in erthe worshepyd as goddessys,
 Ynde stonys vpon ther goldene tressys, —
 What was ther ende? Rede Bochas, ye shal se,
 By fatal spynnyng of Parchas sustryn thre. 3456
- Off this matere ther be bookys nyne,
 Alle of Fortunys transmutaciouns;
 This blynde lady, how she made hem declyne
 From ther moost famous exaltaciouns: 3460
 Somme ploungyd down to the infernal dongouns,
 With cruel Pluto depe down in helle,
 With Proserpyna perpetuelly to dwelle.
- For* ther demerytes and lakkyng of vertu, 3464
 That they lyst nat ther Souereyn Lord to knowe:
 For whoo is rekkelees to serve our Lord Iesu,
 Fortvnys wheel shal soone hym ovir-throwe,
 Though Famys trompet of gold [a]lowde blowe 3468
 His victoryes, his marcial renouns,
 Rad and remembryd in dyvers regiouns.
- Whoo knoweth nat God is falle fer in slouthe;
 Be-war ye Prynces euere of thynges tweyne: 3472
 In euery quarel that your ground be trouthe;
 Next in ordre, doth your besy peyne
 To love Iesu, your Lord moost sovereyne,
 Truste hym of herte, and he shal nat faylle 3476
 To be your socour in pees and in bataylle.
- For lak of trust twyes I sey, allas,
 And make her-oon an exclamacioun:
 Alle the myschevys remembryd in Bochas, 3480
 Fro tyme of Crystes in-carnacioun,
 Haue been for lakkyng of devocioun,
 That ye Prynces, of wylful negligence,
 Lyst nat to God do dewe reuerence. 3484

The book remembers the sudden falls of famous princes and proud princesses, who were worshipped as goddesses on earth. What was their end? Read Bochas and you shall see.

There are nine books, and all tell of the transmutations of Fortuna,

and of those who fell for their faults, who did not care to know the Sovereign Lord.

Beware, Princes, that in every quarrel your ground is truth; and do not fail to love and trust Jesus, who will be your succour.

Princes, you are no gods,

3464. For] Two H 1766.

3467. soone hym] hym sone R 3.

3468. alowde R 3. *Space of one stanza left here in R 3 (214d) but no omission of text.*

3478. H 5 begins again with this line, leaf 181.

- but mortal men,
more likely to
fall than a
beggar; and the
most grievous
fall is of those
who sit
highest.
- Dysdeyneth nat to haue in remembraunce,
Ye be no goddys, ye be but men mortal;
Stonde vndir daungeer of Fortunys chaunce,
More lyk to towmble and more neer to* fal, 3488
Than doth a beggere in this lyff mortal:
Off vertuous poore the fal is nat vnsoffte;
Moost grevous fal, of them that sitte aloffte.
- Princes, do not
stand in such
case; for when
Death comes
you know no
better help
than the poor,
no more than
did rich Cyrus
or Sardanapalus.
- Ye Prynces quake, stond not in such[e] caas; 3492
Yit whan deth comyth, ye can no bet socour
Than can* the pore, record of Iohn Bochas;
Hath mynde heron and make yow a merour
Off such as regnyd in glorye and [gret] honour, 3496
As ryche Cyrus and Sardanapalle,
How fro the wheel of Fortune they wer falle.
- Set not your
trust on false
Fortune: all
this book
treats of such
as did so from
Adam, who
was expelled
from Paradise,
- Set nat your trust, beth war of fals Fortune;
For al this book tretith of such matere, 3500
Gynneth his processe, and so forth doth contvne
Lamentable and doolful for to here,
How Adam first, with a ful hevy chere,
From a place moost souereyn of delys 3504
Whylom departyd, out of Paradys,
- down to King
John, who
reigned in
France and
was taken
prisoner at
Poitiers
- Cherubyn kepyng* the gate of Paradys
With brennyng swerd that ther shulde entre noon.
This book conveyed by ful greet avys, 3508
Ceryously from Adam to Kyng Iohn,
Regnyng in Fraunce; of whom nat yoore agoon
I sawh remembryd the date of thylk[e] yeerys,
Whan he was take prysowner at Peyterys, 3512
- in 1356,
the last of all
in this book.
- A thousand toold by computacioun,
Thre hundryd ovir, fyffty and sex yeer,
Trewly reknyd fro the Incarnacioun,
Whan seid[e] Iohn was take prysowner, 3516
Toold and remembryd by the cronycleer.
As Adam was first that did[e] falle,
So in this book Kyng Iohn was last of alle.
- We had never
stood in such
peril nor dread
- We hadde nevir stondyn in daungeer 3520
Off worldly stryff nor perellys ful mortal,

3488. to] a H 1766, P, H 5. 3489. mortal] morall R 3.

3490. poore] power P. 3492. suyche] no such P.

3493. can] cam H 1766.

3506. kepyng] abydyng kepyng H 1766, H, R 3, P — gate]
gatis H, gatys H 5.

- Nor dreed of deth, nat in a thousand yeer,
 Nor of Fortune that tournyth as a bal,
 Yiff Adam hadde in Paradys had no* fal; 3524
 Touch of an appyl and inobedyence, —
 Cause that Fortune is had in such reuerence.
- But for to telle and speke in wordys pleyn,
 How Fortune kaught first an interesse 3528
 To be callyd, nat trewly but in veyn,
 Off worldly peple a fals froward goddesse, —
 This errour gan of bestial rudnesse, 3532
 Demyng them-sylff they wern assuryd wel,
 Whan they sat hyh on hire vntrusty wheel.
- Rekne vp alle thoo that* haue doon hire seruice
 And folwyd on in ther oppynyoun,
 Lyk as this book in ordre doth devyse; 3536
 Peyse in ballaunce: what was ther guerdoun?
 A sodeyn reys, an vnwar toublyng down;
 Yit, for al this, thorough hire flaterye,
 Al worldly peple doth hire magneffye! 3540

of death nor of Fortune had it not been for Adam's fall in Paradise;

and for that reason Fortune first came to be called a false goddess by worldly people, an error that began of brutish ignorance.

Reckon up all who did her service — what was their reward? A sudden rise, an unexpected tumbling down. Yet all worldly people worship her.

[¶ The laste lenvoye direct vn to my lord.]¹

- N**OBLE Prynce, remembreth al this thynges,
 Peyseth* of resoun, lefft vp your eye and se,
 As your lyne conveyed is fro kynges,
 How vertu longeth vn-to dignyte.* 3544
 [What folwith afftyr? grace & prosperite.]
 Hath this in mynde and theron doth attende,
 Mawgre Fortvny's mutabilite,*
 Ye shal to-Godward encresyn and ascende. 3548
- Off humble entent, with herte & hand quakyng,
 Directe this book vn-to your mageste;
 In which ye may, at good leyseer redyng,
 Seen dyvers chaunges of worldly vanyte, — 3552
 Prynces cast down from ther imperyal se,

Noble Prince, remember that virtue belongs to dignity: have this in mind, and in spite of Fortune's mutability you shall prosper and ascend to God.

This book, in which you may see many changes of worldly vanity, is humbly addressed to your majesty.

3524. no] a H 1766. 3534. that] than H 1766.

3542. Peyseth] Peysed H 1766.

3544. vn-to dignyte] afftir grace and prosperite H 1766.

3546. theron] her of R 3 — attende] attende parde H 1766.

3547. mutabilite] whan she wyl pretende H 1766. After 3547 H 1766 inserts: "Whyl ye in vertu regne & dygnite."

¹ The heading and following six stanzas are supplied from MS. Harley 1766, leaf 264 verso, collated with R3, H5 and P.

- For they wer froward, lyst nat condiscende
 Vertu to sewe and vices [for] to fle,
 So to-Godward tencrenen and ascende. 3556
- Fal of othir thorough vicious lyvyng,
 Somme dysgradyd vn-to ful lowh degre,
 Off providence lat ther chastysyng
 For lak of grace, to yow a merour be. 3560
 Wher vertu regnyth, ther is felycite
 In suyche as lyst ther froward lyff tamende;
 Whoo lovith that Lord which hath the souereynte
 Shal ay be grace encresyn and ascende. 3564
- Though your estat lyk Phebus wer shynyng,
 Yit, for al that, ye haue no sewerte,
 How long[e] tyme is here your abydyng;
 Age, with hire cosyn callyd Infirmyte, 3568
 Wyl cleyme hire ryght of verry dewete;
 Deth takith no mede; afforn he wyl not sende.
 Provide your-sylff whyl ye haue liberte,
 Dayly in vertu tencresyn and ascende. 3572
- As men dysserve, be record of wrytyng,
 An expert thyng by old auctoryte,
 Ye shal receyve your mede or your punysshying,
 By egal peys of trouthe and equite. 3576
 Beth war afforn, folk haue ther tounges fre,
 Lyk your dyscert shal rede your legende;
 This verray soth, voyde of duplecite,
 Yevith hem cause to preye ye may ascende. 3580
- Off hyh prudence afor ymagynyng,
 Yiff vertu guye your magnanymyte,
 Than good[e] repoort afftir your partyng
 Shal floure and shyne in euery comounte. 3584
 Almesse partyd to folk in poverté,
 And compassyoun the praylle to amende,
 Is beest[e] mene toward the hevenly se
 By vertuouus lyff tencresyn and ascende. 3588

Let the chastising by Providence of men for vicious living and lack of grace be a mirror to you! Where virtue reigns there is felicity. Although your estate shine like Phœbus, there is no certainty how long you may abide here; age and her cousin infirmity claim their right; death will take no bribe: provide yourself daily to increase in virtue while you are still free.

As men deserve shall they be punished or rewarded. Beware in time, for tongues are free and your story shall read according to your merit.

If virtue guide you, then good report shall follow your parting from this world.

3558. dysgrated H 5. 3563. that] ye P.

3571. your-sylff] your lyfe P.

3575. 1st your] to your R 3, P — 2nd your] om. H 5.

3578. shal] to R 3. 3579. soth] trouthe H 5.

¶ Woordis of the translatur vn to his book atte ende.¹

WITH lettre* & leuys go litil book trembling,	[p. 447]	Go, little book, pray to the prince for pity.
Pray to þe Prince to haue on the pite,		Thou hast no bright colours,
Voide of picture & enlumyny[n]g,		no curious songs of
Which hast of Cithero no corious dite,	3592	Cithæron, no flowers of beauty: God
Nor of his gardyn no flour[e]s of beute;		grant that thy rudeness
God graunt[e] grace thi reudnesse nat offende		offend not his presence.
The hih noblesse, the magnanymyte		
Of his presence, whan thou shalt up ascende.	3596	
And, for my part, of oon hert abidyng,		And I, kneeling on my knee,
Void of chaung and mutabilite,		with shaking hand do
I do presente this book with hand shaking,		present this book of whole
Of hool affecciuon knelyng on my kne,	3600	affection, praying the Lord to send
Praying the Lord, the Lord oon, too & thre,		you might, grace, and
Whos magnificence no clerk can comprehende,		prosperity.
To sende you miht, grace and prosperite		
Euer in vertu tencresen & ascende.	3604	

Finis libri Amen.

¶ Go kis the steppis of them that wer forthring,		Go kiss the steps of those
Laureat poetes, which hadde souereynte		laureate poetes
Of elloquence to supporte thy making,		who sup- ported thy
And pray all tho that shal this processe see,	3608	making, and be humble
In thyn excus[e], that thei list to bee		that thou mayst ascend
Fauourable to lakke or to comende;		unto the grace of men.
Set thi ground upon humylite,		
Vnto ther grace that thou maist up ascende.	3612	
In a short clause thi content rehersing,		Since one man climbs up to
As oon up clymbeth to gret prosperite,		prosperity and
So another, bi expert knowleching,		another falls from wealth
Fro gret richesse is brouht to pouerte.	3616	to poverty, alas, O book,
Alas, O book, what shal I seyn of the?		what shall I say of thee?
Thi tragedies thoruh al the world to sende,		

3589. lettre] lettres B, letter P, lettir H, lettyr H 5.

3596. his] their H. 3599. shaking] quakyng H.

3601. 2nd Lord] om. P. 3602. can] may P.

¹ "The wordys of the translatur." MS. J. leaf 183d.

Go fourth, I pray; excuse thi-silf & me;
 Who loueth most vertu hiest shal ascende. 3620

Thou art clad
 in the black
 of complaint
 and mourning,
 thou art
 called the
 Fall of
 Princes, inter-
 mingled with
 adversity and
 joy; and
 those who will
 prosper must
 ascend
 by virtue.

Blak be thi weede of compleynt & moornyng,
 Callid Fall of Princis from ther felicite,
 Lik chaunteplure, now singyng now weeping,
 Wo afftir merthe, next ioie aduersite, 3624
 So entermedlid ther is no seurete,
 Lik as this book doth preise and reprehende, —
 Now on the wheel, now set in lough degre;
 Who wil encrece bi vertu must ascende. 3628

Finis totius libri.

[Explicit John Bochas.]¹

¹ MS. J. leaf 184 recto.

[Greneacres A Lenvoye vpon John Bochas.]¹

Blake be thy bondes and thy wede alsoo, Thou sorowfull book of matier discepeired, In tokne of thyn inward mortal woo, Which is so badde it may not be enpeired. Thou owest nat outward to be feired, That inward hast so many a ruffull clause; Such be thyn habite of colour as thi cause.	4
No cloth of tyssewe ne veluet crymesyne, But lik thi monke, moornyng vnder his hood, Go weile and wepe with wofull Proserpyne, And lat thi teeres multeplie the flood Of blak Lythey vnder the bareyn wood, Where-as goddesse hath hir hermytage, — Helpe hir to wepe, and she wyll geve the wage.	8 12
Noblesse of Ioye sith thou maist nat approche, This blak goddesse I counsell the tobeie. Compleyne with hir vnder the craggy roche, With wepyng soules vpon the said Lythey, Sith thou of sorowe art instrument and keye, — So harpe and synge there, as thou may be herde; For every Ioie is of thi name afferd.	16 20
Prynnesse of woo and wepyng, Proserpyne, Whiche herborowest sorow euen at thyn hert[e] roote, Admytte this Bochas for a man of thyne; And though his habite blakker be than soote, Yitt was it maked of thi monkes boote, That him translated in Englishsh of Latyne: Therefore now take him for a man of thyne.	24 28

1. bondes] hondes P, P 1.
 4. impeyred P.
 5. feared P.
 6. Ruffull J.
 8. cremesyne P 1, P.
 20. mayst P.
 21. euery] euer P, P 1.
 26. boote] hode P, P 1.

¹ *The Envoy by Greneacres is supplied from MS. J. leaf 184 recto, collated with P 1 and P.*

APPENDIX.

¶ The Daunce of Machabree¹

wherin is liuely expressed and shewed the state of
manne, and howe he is called at vncertaine tymes by
death, and when he thinketh least thereon: made
by thaforsayde Dan John Lydgate
Monke of Burye.

¶ The Prologe

O YE folkes hard hearted as a stone,
Whiche to this worlde geue* al your aduertence,
Lyke as it should euer lasten in one, —
Where is your wit, where is your prouidence 4
To seen aforne the sodayn violence
Of cruel death, that be so wyse and sage,
Which slayeth, alas, by stroke or pestilence
Both yong & olde of lowe and high parage? 8
Death spareth nought low ne high degre,
Popes, kynges, ne worthye Emperours;
Whan they shine most in felicite,
He can abate the freshnes of her flours, 12
Her bright[e] sunne clipsen with his shours,
Make them plunge fro her sees lowe; —
Mauger the might of al these conquerours,
Fortune hath them from her whele ythrow. 16

1. folkes] folkes that bene, Harley 116 = H.
2. this world geue] the worlde haue, Tottel = T.
3. laste euer H. 6. be] dethe *corrected to* slethe H.
- 7.] om. H. 8. high and loue H. 9. hight ne law H.
10. in thaire felicite H. 15. Maugre H.

¹ The text, here printed because of its interest in connexion with the "Fall of Princes," is based on Tottel's edition (fol. ccxx to end of fol. ccxxiii), collated with MS. Harley 116 and in part with MS. Lansdowne 669. The punctuation and use of capital letters have been modernized, and *th* substituted for *y* (*þ*). A superior text will be included by Miss Hammond in her forthcoming "Fifteenth Century Anthology." The two anonymous woodcuts (size of originals 160 x 110 and 158 x 110) are reproduced from Tottel. They are in both drawing and composition very superior to the average English woodcut of the period and of considerable interest as the work of an unknown designer of great talent.

The Daunce of Machabree

- Considereth this, ye folkes that been wyse,
 And it emprinteth in your memoriall,
 Like thensample which that at Parise
 I fonde depict ones vpon* a wal 20
 Full notably, as I rehearse shall.
 Of a Frenche clarke takyng acquaintaunce,
 I toke on me to translaten all
 Out of the Frenche Machabrees daunce. 24
- By whose aduise and counsayle at the lest,
 Through her stiering and her mocion,
 I obeyed vnto her request,
 Therof to make a playn translacion 28
 In English tonge, of entencion
 That proud[e] folkes that bene stout and bolde,
 As in a mirrour toforne in her reason
 Her vgly fine there clearly may beholde. 32
- By [this] ensample, that thei in her ententes
 Amend her life in euery maner age.
 The which[e] daunce at Sainct Innocentes
 Portrayed is, with all the surplusage, 36
 Youen vnto vs our liues to correct
 And to declare the fine of our passage, —
 Right anone my stile I wil direct
 To shewe this worlde is but a pilgrimage. 40

¶ The ende of the Prologe.

¶ The Wordes of the Translatour.

- O** CREATURES ye that bene reasonable,
 The life desiring which is eternall,
 Ye may see here doctrine ful notable
 Your life to lead[e], which that is mortall, 44
 Thereby to learne in especiall,
 How ye shal trace the daunce of Machabree,
 To man and woman ylike naturall;
 For death ne spareth high ne love degree. 48
- In this myroure euery wight may fynde,
 That him behoueth to gone vpon this daunce.
 Who goeth toforne or who shall go behynde,
 All dependeth in Goddes ordinaunce. 52
 Wherefore eche man lowly take* his chauce;
 Death spareth nouthere poore ne* bloud royall:
 Eche* man therefore haue this in remembraunce,
 Of oo matter God hath yforged all. 56

¶ The Daunce of Machabree.

20. vpon] in T. 30. that] whiche H.
 32. may clerly ther H. *Line 40 is misplaced after line 36 H.*
 41. ye] om. Lansdowne 699 = L. 42. which] bat H.
 46. of Machabree] which that ye see L. 47. ylike] that be L.
 49. wight] man L. 51. toforne] before L — shall go] goth L.
 53. eche man lowly take] lowly euery man T.
 54. nouthere poore ne] not poore ne yet T. 55. Eche] euery T.

Cunctis mortalibus mors debetur.



¶ Death fyrst speaketh vnto the Pope, and after to euery degree as foloweth.

YE that been set most high in* dignitie
 Of al estates in earth spirituall,
 And like to* Peter hath the soueraintee
 Ouer the church and states temporall, 60
 Vpon this daunce ye first begin[ne] shall,
 As most worthy lord and gouernour;
 For al the worship of your estate papall,
 And of [al] lordship to God is the honour. 64

The Pope maketh aunswere.

FYRST me behoueth this daunce for to lede,
 Which sat in earth[e] highest in my see,
 The state ful perilous, whoso taketh hede,
 To occupie Seynt Petris* dignitee; 68
 But for al that [fro] Death I may not flee,
 Vpon* this daunce with other for to trace;
 For which al honor, who prudently can see,
 Is litle worth that doth so soone passe. 72

57. most] *om.* L — high in] in high T.

59. to] as T, H — hath] have L, hadde H.

60. chirche most in especiall L. 61. ye] *om.* H.

64. of] *om.* H. 65. for] with deth L. 67. ful] *om.* L.

68. Seynt Petris] Peters T, H. 69. fro] *om.* H.

70. Vpon] On T, H — this] his H. 71. which al] sich L.

Death speaketh to the Emperour.

SYR Emperour, lord of al the grounde,
 Ye [Most] souereine prince, surmountyng* of noblesse,
 Scepter and swerde, & al your high prowesse; 76
 Behind you leue* your treasour and* riches,
 And with other to my daunce obey:
 Against my might is worth none hardines,
 Adams children al they must[e] deye. 80

The Emperour maketh aunswer.

I NOTE to whom that I may [me] appeale
 Touching death, which doth me so constrain;
 There is no gin to helpen my querel,
 But spade and pickoys my graue to atteyne, — 84
 A simple shete, there is nomore to seyn,
 To wrappen in my body and visage:
 And therupon I may me sore* compleyne,
 That lordes great haue litle auantage. 88

Death speaketh to the Cardinal.

YE been abashed, it semeth, and in drede,
 Syr Cardinal, it sheweth by your chere;
 But yet for-thy ye folowe shall in dede,
 With other folke my daunce for to lere. 92
 Your great aray, al shal [ye] leauen here, —
 Your hat of red, your vesture of great coste;
 All these thynges reckoned well in fere,*
 In great[e] honour good auyse is loste. 96

The Cardinall maketh aunswere.

I HAUE great cause, certes this is no faile
 To be abashed and greatly dread[e] me,
 Sith Death is come me sodainly tassaile,*
 That I shall neuer hereafter clothed be 100
 In grise nor ermine like vnto my degree,
 Mine hat of red leuen eke in distresse, —
 By which I haue conceyued* wel and see
 That worldly* ioye endeth in heauines. 104

Death speaketh to the Kyng.

O NOBLE Kyng, most worthy of renoun,
 Come foorth anone, for al your worthines
 That whylom had about you enuiron
 Great royaltie and passing hye noblesse. 108

74. Most] *om.* H — surmountyng] & highest T, H.
 75. mot] muste L, moste H.
 77. you leue] leten T, L — and] and your T, L.
 79. is worth] worthe is H. 81. me] *om.* L. 83. gin] bote H.
 87. And therupon I may me sore] wherupon sore I me T, L.
 88. litle auantage] so lytell vayntage H.
 93. ye] *om.* L — leue H. 95. fere] feare T, L.
 99. tassaile] to assaile T. 100 and 101 are transposed in H.
 103. conceyued] learned T, L.
 104. That] How that T, L — worldly] al T, L.

But right anon [for] al your great highnes,
Sole from your men in hast ye shall it lete,
Who most aboundeth here in great riches,
Shall beare with hym but a [single] shete. 112

The Kyng maketh aunswere.

I HAUE nought learned here-tofore to daunce
No daunce in sooth of footyng so sauage,
Where-through I se by clere demonstraunce,
What pride is worth or force of high linage! 116
Death all fordo[er]th, this is his vsage,
Great and smal that in this world soiourne:
Who is most meke, I hold[e] hym most sage;
For we shall all to dede* ashes tourne. 120

Death speaketh to the Patriarche.

SYR Patriarche, al your humble chere
Ne quiteth you nought nor your humilitie;
Your double crosse of gold and stoness clere,
Your power whole and al your dignitie 124
Some other shall of very equitie
Possede anon, as I rehearse can:
Trusteth neuer that ye shall Pope be;
For foly* hope deceiue many a man! 128

The Patriarche maketh aunswere.

WORLDLY honour, gret treasour & riches
Haue me deceiued soothfastly in dede;
Mine old[e] ioyes been turned to* tristesse!
What auayleth such treasours to possede? 132
Hie clymyng* vp a fall hath for his mede.
Great estates folke wasten out of number;
Who mounteth high, it is sure and no drede,
Great[e] burden doth hym oft encomber. 136

Death speaketh to the Cunstable.

IT is my ryght to arest you and constreyne
With vs to daunce, my mayster Sir Cunstable!
For more stronger than euer was Charlemain,
Death hath afforced, and more worshipable; 140
For hardines ne knighthode, this no* fable,
Nor strong armure of plates ne* of maile, —
What gayneth armes of folkes most notable,
Whan cruell death list hem* to assaile? 144

The Cunstable maketh aunswere.

MY purpose was and whole entencion
To assail castel[le]s & mighty fortresses,
And bryng[e] folke vnto subieccion,
To seke honour, fame, and great riches; 148

109. for] *om.* L. 112. single] *om.* L.
119. I holde hym] holde he is H. 120. dede] the dead T, L.
121. al] *with* all H. 128. foly] holy T, L. 131. to] into T, L.
133. Hie clymyng] It climbeth T, L.
140. afforced] enforced H.
141. this] *om.* H — no] is no T, L, H. 142. ne] nother T, L.
144. hem] him T. 146. fortresse H. 148. riches H.

But I see that al worldly prowesse
 Death can abate, which is a great despite;
 To him alone, sorow and eke swetenes:
 For agaynst death is found[e] no respite. 152

Death speaketh to the Archebishop.

SYR Archebishop, why do ye you withdrawe
 So frowardly, as it wer by disdayne?
 Ye must approche [vn] to my mortall lawe;
 It to contrary it wer but* in vayne: 156
 For day by day there is none other gayne,
 Death at the hand pursueth euery coast;
 Prest and debte mot bee yelde againe,
 And at a daye men counten with her host. 160

The Archebishop maketh aunswere.

ALAS, I wote not what* partie for to flee,
 For drede of death I haue so gret distres!
 Tescape* his might I can no refute see;
 That who-so knew his constreint and duresse, 164
 He would[e] take reason to maistresse.
 Aduē my treasure, my pompe & pride also,
 My painted chambers, my port & my freshnes, —
 Thyng that behoueth nedes mot be do. 168

Death speaketh to the Barone.

YE that among[es] Lordes and Barons
 Haue had so long[e] worship and renoun,
 Foryet your trumpetes and your clarions;
 This is no dreame nor simulacion. 172
 Whylom your custom and entencion
 Was with ladies to daunsen in the shade;
 But oft it happeth, in conclusion,
 One man breaketh that another made. 176

The Baron maketh aunswere.

FULL oft[e] sith I haue been auctorised
 To high *emprises* & thinges of gret fame.
 Of high & low my thanke also deuised,
 Cherished with ladies & women high of name; 180
 Ne neuer on me was put no defame,
 In lordes courte,* which that was notable;
 But deathes stroke hath made me [so] lame:
 Under heauen in earth is nothyng stable. 184

Death speaketh to the Princesse.

COME forth anon, my Lady good Princesse,
 Ye must also gon vpon this daunce.
 Nought may auayle your great straungenesse,
 Nether your beauty nor your gret pleasaurce, 188

153. you] so H. 155. vnto] to L.
 156. but] nought but T, L. 158. the] om. H.
 159. debte] death L. 160. a] oo H. 161. what] to what T, L.
 163. Tescape] To escape T. 166. &] my H.
 182. courte] of court T, L. 183. so] om. L.

Your riche aray, nother your daliaunce,
That whylom couth so many holde in hond
In loue, for al your double variaunce.
Ye mot as nowe this footyng vnderstonde. 192

The Princesse maketh aunswere.

ALAS, I see there is none other boote,
Deth hath in earth no lady nor maistres,
And* on this daunce yet mot I nedes fote:
For there nis quene, countesse ne dutchesse, 196
Flouring in bountie nor in her fayrenes,
That shode of Death mot passe the passage,
When our beautie and counterfeit fairnes
Dieth, adue then our rimpled age! 200

Death speaketh to the Bishop.

MY Lord Sir Bishop, with miter & crosse,
For al your riches, soothlye I ensure,
For all your treasure [so longe] kept in closse,
Your worldly goodes and goodes of nature, 204
[And] of your shepe the ghostly dredeful* cure,
With charge committed to your prelacie,
For to account ye shal be brought to lure, —
No wight is sure that climbeth ouer hye. 208

The Bishop maketh aunswere.

MINE heart truely is nother glad ne mery,
Of sodein tidinges which that ye [me] u.ing;
My feast is turned vnto a simple ferye,*
That for discomfourt me list nothyng [to] syng. 212
The world contrarie now to my* werking,
Which al estates* can so disherite;
He al with-halt, alas, at our partyng,
And al* shall passe saue onely our merite. 216

Death speaketh to the Squyer.

COMMETH forth Syr Squyer, right fresh of your araye,
That conne of daunces al the new[e] guise,
Thoghe ye bare armes, fresshe horsed yesterday,*
With spere & shielde at your vncouth deuse, 220

195. And] & T — this] his H. 197. bountie] beaute H.
198.] That she of right most nedys the trace sew H — shode]
shooe T. 199. When] For to H.
200.] Our Reueled age saith farwell adiev H.
201. with] your H. 203. For] om. H — so longe] om. L.
205. And] om. L — ghostly dredeful] dredeful ghostly T, L.
210. me] om. L.
211. vnto a simple ferye] into simple terie T, L.
212. to] om. L.
213. contrarie now to my] contrarieth to me now in T —
world] word L — now] om. L — my] me in L.
214. Which al estatis] That al folkes T, H.
215.] And needis we must on to our departyng L.
216. And al] Al thyng T, H.
217. This stanza is omitted in L — Commeth] Come H — of]
in H. 218. davnce H.
219.] If ye bare harnes freshly horsed yesterday T.

And toke on you so many high emprise,
Dauneth with vs; it wyl no better be;
There is no succour in no maner wyse:
For no man may fro Deathes stroke flee. 224

The Squyer maketh aunswere.

SITHENS that Death me holdeth in his lase,
Yet shal I speake oo worde or that* I passe:
Aduē al myrth, adue now al solace,
Aduē my ladies whilom so freshe of face, 228
Aduē beautie, pleasaunce, and al solace!
Of Deathes chaunge euery day is prime,
Thinke on your soules or* that Death manace;
For all shal rot, and no man wot what time. 232

Death speaketh to the Abbot.

COMMETH forth Syr Abbot, with your brode hatte,
Beeth nought abashed thogh* ye hauen ryght;
Great is your head, your belly rounde* and fat,
Ye mot come daunce, thogh* ye be nothyng light. 236
Leaueh your abbey to some other wight,
Your heyre is of age your state to occupie;
Who that is fattest, I haue hym behyght,
[Shall] in his graue* soonest putrifie. 240

The Abbot maketh aunswere.

OF thy manace I hauen o gret* enuy,
That I shall now leaue al* gouernaunce,
But that I shal as a cloysterer dye;
This Death is to me passing great greuaunce. 244
My libertie nor my great habundaunce,
What may they vayne* in any maner wyse?
Yet aske I mercy with deuoute* repentaunce,
Thogh* in dying to late men them auise. 248

Death speaketh to the Abbess.

AND ye my lady, gentle dame Abbesse,
With your mantel[le]s furred large and wyde,
Your veile, your wimple, your ryng* of gret riches,
And bedes, sister, ye mot now leyn a-syde;* 252
For to this daunce I must be* your guide,
Thogh* ye be tender borne of gentle bloode,
While that ye* liue for your selfe prouide;
For after death[e] no man hath no good. 256

222. no] not H.

225. lace H. 226. or that] ere T, L. 231. or] ere T, L.

233. Come H. 234. abashed thogh] abasht if T, L.

235. rounde] large T, H. 236. if] thogh H.

239. fattest] most fatte H. 240. Shall in his graue] In his
graue shall T, L. 241. thy] these T.

241. thy manace I haue no gret] these threts haue I none T —
thi tretyse L — no gret] noon L.

242. al] al the T, L. 246. vayne] auayne T, H, L.

247. deuoute] heartely T, L. 248. Thogh] If T, L.

250. mantel L. 251. your ryng] passing T, H.

252. a-syde] on syde T, H. 253. must be] shalbe T.

254. Thogh] If T — borne] and borne H.

255. While that ye] Whiles that you T, L. 256. man] wyght H.

The Abbesse maketh aunswere.

A LAS that Death hath thus for me ordeined,
 That in no wise I maye it nought declyne,
 If it so be ful oft I am* constreined,
 Brest and throte my notes out to twyne, 260
 My chekes round vernysshed* for to shine,
 Ungird ful oft to walken at the large, —
 Thus cruel Death with al estates fine,
 Who hath no shippe must* rowe in bote or barge. 264

Death speaketh to the Bayly.

COME forth, Sir Bayly, that knowen all the guise,
 By your office of trouth & rightwisnes,
 Ye must come to a newe assyse,
 Extorcions and wronges to redresse; 268
 Ye be somned, as lawe biddeth expresse,
 To yeue accomptes the* Iudge wil you charge,
 Which hath ordeined to excluden al falsnes,
 That euery man shal beare his own[e] charge. 272

The Bayly maketh aunswere.

O THOU Lord God this is a hard iourney,
 To which aforne I toke but litle hede;
 My chaunce is turned, & that forthinketh me,
 Whilom with iudges what me list to spede 276
 Lay in my might, by labour oft for mede.
 But sith there is no rescus by battayle,
 I hold him wise that couth wel seen in dede,
 Again[es] Death that none apel may vayle. 280

Death speaketh to the Astronomer.

COME forth, Maister, that lookest vp so farre,
 With instrumentes of Astronomie
 To take the grees and hyght of euery starre;
 What may auaille all your astrologie? — 284
 Sith of Adam all the genealogie,
 Made first of God to walke vpon the ground,
 Death aresteth,* thus sayth theologic:
 And all shall dye for an apple rounde. 288

The Astronomer maketh aunswere.

FOR all my craft, cunnyng and* science,
 I can nought find[e] no prouision,
 Ne* in the starres seke* no difference
 By domifying nor calculacion, 292

257. thus for me] for me so L.
 258. it nought declyne] nat hym eschewe L.
 259. am] haue T, L. 261. vernysshed] garnished T, L.
 262. Vngirt H. 264. must] he must T, L.
 268. Extorcious H. 270. the] that T, L. 274. To] To the H.
 277. by] for H. 278. sith] sethyn H — by] ne H.
 279. couth wel seen] cowde see H.
 285. of] that of H.
 287. aresteth] with arest T, L. 289. and] or T, L.
 291. Ne] Nother T, L — seke] search out T, L.
 292. domifying] demonstryng H — nor] ne H.

Saue finally, in conclusion,
 For to descriue our cunningy euery dele:
 There is no more by sentence of reason,
 Who liueth aryght mot nedes dye well. 296

Death speaketh to the Burgis.

SYR Burgis, what doe ye lenger* tarye?
 For all your auoyre and youre great riches,
 Thoghe* ye be strong, deinous and contrary,
 Toward this daunce ye mot you nedes dresse; 300
 For your* tresour, plentie and largesse,
 From other it came and shall vnto strangers.
 He is a foole that in such busines,
 Wot nought for whom he stuffeth his garners! 304

The Burgis maketh aunswere.

CERTES to me it is great displeasaunce,
 To leaue al this & mai it nought assure:
 Howses,* rentes, treasor & substauce, —
 Death al fordoth, suche is his nature. 308
 Therfore wise is no creature,
 That set his heart on good that moste* disseuer;
 The world it lent, the worlde wil it recure;
 And who most hath, lothest dyeth euer. 312

Death speaketh to the Chanon Seculer.

AND ye, Syr Chanon, with many great prebende,
 Ye may no lenger haue distribucion
 Of golde [and] siluer, largelye to dispende;
 For there is nowe no consolacion 316
 But daunce with vs, for al your high renoun.
 For ye of death[e] stonde* vpon the brinke,
 Ye may therof haue no delacion;
 Death commeth ay when men least on him thinke. 320

The Chanon maketh aunswere.

MY benefice with mony personage,
 God wot ful lite may me now comfort.
 Death hath of me so great auantage,
 That al my riches may me nought disport, — 324
 Amisse of gris, they wyl ayein resorte,
 Vnto the world a surples and prebende.
 Al is vainglory, truly to reporte,
 To dyen well eche man should entende. 328

297. lenger] long T, L. 298. auoyre] haueur H.
 299. Thoghe] Yf T, L.
 300. Toward] To H — mot you] muste now H.
 301. your] of al T, L. 307. Howses] How these T, L.
 308. fordoth] destroieth H.
 310. on] of H — moste] may T, L. 311. 1st it] is H.
 318. For ye of death stonde] For if death stode T, R.
 320. ay] euer H.
 321. benefice] benefices H. 322. lytell H. 323. of] ouer H.
 324. That] om. H — me nought disport] be me not support H.
 325. Amys H.

Death speaketh to the Marchaunte.

YE rich Marchant, ye mot looke hitherwarde,
 That passed haue ful many diuers lond
 On horse, on foote, hauing most regard
 To lucre & winnyng, as I vnderstond. 332
 But now to daunce ye mot geue me your hond;
 For al your labour ful litle auayleth nowe.
 Aduē vaynglory, both of free and bonde,
 None more coueit then thei that haue ynow. 336

The Marchaunt maketh aunswere.

BY many an hyll and many a strong[e] vale
 I haue trauailed with many marchandise;
 Quer the sea downe cary many a bale
 To sondrye Iles, more than I can deuuse, 340
 Mine heart inward ay fret* with couetise,
 But al for nought, now Deth me doth* constrein:
 For which I se, by record of the wyse,
 Who al embraceth litle shall restrayne.* 344

Death speaketh to the Chartreux.

YEUE me your honde, with chekes dead and pale,
 Caused of watche & long abstinence,
 Sir Chart[e]reux, and your self auale
 Vnto this daunce with humble pacience. 348
 To striue ayein may be no resistance,
 Lenger to liue set nought your memorye;
 Thogh* I be lothsome as in apparence,
 Aboue[n] al men Death [hath] the victorie. 352

The Chartreux maketh aunswere.

VNTO this* world I was dead long agon
 By mine order and my profession;
 And eueryman, be he neuer so strong,
 Dreadeth to dye by kindly mocion 356
 After his fleshly inclinacion.
 But please to God my soule [for] to borowe
 Fro Fiendes myght and fro damnacion:
 Some arne to-day that shal nought be to-morow. 360

Death speaketh to the Sargeaunte.

COME forth Sir Sargeaunt, with your stately mase,
 Make no defence nor rebellion,
 Nought may* auale to grutchen in this case,
 Thogh* ye be deyners of condicion: 364

339. downe] do H.

341. fret] fretteth T. 342. me doth T. 343. For] By H.

344. restrayne] constrein T.

351. Thogh] If T — as] om. H. 353. this] the T.

355. And] Thoghe H. 358. to] it to H. 359. 2nd fro] om. H.

362. nor] ne no H. 363. Nought may] It may nought T.

364. Thogh] If T — deynous H.

For neyther [ap]pele nor proteccion
 May you fraunchise to doe nature wrong;
 For there is none so sturdy chaumpion,
 Thogh* he be mightie, another is also strong. 368

The Sargeaunt maketh aunswere.

HOWE durste thou* Death set on me arest,
 That am the kynges chosen officer,
 Which yesterday, both[en] east and west,
 Mine office dyd, ful surquedous of chere; 372
 But now this day I am arested here,
 And can nought flee, thoh* I had it sworne.
 Eche* man is loth to die, both farre & nere,
 That hath nought learned for to dye* aforne. 376

Death speaketh to the Monke.

SYR Monke, also with your blacke habite,
 Ye may no lenger hold[c] here soioure;
 There is nothyng that may you here respite
 Agein my might you for to doe succour; 380
 Ye mot accompt[c] touchyng your labour,
 How ye haue spend it, in dede, word & thought.
 To earth and ashes turneth euery floure;
 The life of man is but a thyng of nought. 384

The Monke maketh aunswere.

IHAD leauer in the cloyster be,
 At my booke and study my seruice,
 Which is a place contemplatife to see;
 But I haue spent my life in mony wyse, 388
 Like as a foole dissolute and nice.
 God of his mercy graunt me repentaunce.
 By chere outward hard is to deuise,
 Al be not merye which that men seen daunce. 392

Death speaketh to the Usurer.

THOU Vsurer, looke vp and beholde,
 Unto wyunnyng that settest al* thy payne,
 Whose couetise waxeth neuer colde,
 Thy gredy thrust so sore the doth constraine. 396
 But thou shalt neuer to thy desyre attayne,
 Suche an etike thyne heart[e] freten shall,
 But that of pitie God his honde refraine,
 One perilous stroke shal make thee losen al. 400

367. a champyoun H.

368. Thogh] If T — another is] Deth is H.

369. durste thou] dare this T.

374. can] may H — thogh] if T. 375. Eche] Euery T, H.

376. dye] be ded T. 379.] Per may no thinge her you
 respite H. 380. for] om. H. 381. muste H.

382. spend it in dede word] spendid worde dede H.

385. the] my H — be] to be H. 391. is] om. H.

392. not] no H.

394. wyunnyng that settest al] thy wyunnyng thou settest aye T.

397. to] om. H. 399. But that] That but H.

400. loosen] lese H.

The Usurer maketh aunswere.

NOW [me] behoueth sodeinly to dye,
 Which is to me great paine & eke greuance.
 Succour to fynde I see no maner way
 Of golde nor siluer by none cheuisance; 404
 Death through his hast abideth no purueiance
 Of folkes blynde that can nought loke wel:
 Full oft happeth by kynde of fatall chaunce,
 Some haue fayre eyen that seen neuer adel. 408

The Poore Man boroweth of the Usurer.

VSURER to God is full great offence,
 And in his syght a great abusyon;
 The poore boroweth percase for indigence,
 The riche lent by false collusion, 412
 Onely for lucre in his entencion.
 Death shal both[e] to accomptes fette,
 To make reconing by computacion:
 No man is quit that is behynd of dette. 416

Death speaketh to the Phisicien.

MAISTER of Phisike, which on your vryne
 So looke and gase and stare agaynst the sunne,
 For al your craft and study of medicine,
 [And] all the practike and science that ye cunne, 420
 Your lyues* course so farre forth is yrunne,
 Ayein my might your craft may not endure,
 For al the gold that ye thereby* haue kunne:
 Good leche is he that can himself* recure. 424

The Phisicien maketh aunswer.

FULL long agon that I vnto Phisike
 Set my wit and eke my diligence,
 In speculatife and also in practike,*
 To geat a name through mine excellence, 428
 To fynd out agaynes* pestilence
 Preseruatifes to staunche it and to fine:
 But I dare [say] shortly in sentence,
 Againes* Death is worth no medicine. 432

Death speaketh to the Amerous Squire.

YE that be gentle, so fresh & amerous,
 Of yeres yong flouring in your grene age,
 Lusty [and] fre, of hert eke* desirous,
 Ful of deuises & change in your courage, 436

402. eke] om. H.

406. loke] se H. 407. chaunce] change H.

409. *This stanza is omitted in H.*416. *No is repeated in T.*

417. on] in H. 421. lyues] life T.

423. ye thereby] thereby ye T — haue] hath H.

424. can himself] himself can T. 426. eke] om. H.

427. practike] practife T.

429. agaynes] agaynst T.

432. Againes] Say that against T.

435. eke] & eke T, and (*the rest erased*) H.

Pleasant of port, of loke and of visage:
 But al shal turne into ashes dead;
 For al beautie is but a faynt ymage,
 Which stealeth away or folkes can take hede. 440

The Squyer maketh answer.

ALAS, alas, I can nowe no succour
 Agaynes* Death[e] for myselfe prouide!
 A-due of youth the lusty fresh[e] flower,
 Aduē vainglory of beautie and of pride,* 444
 Aduē all seruike of the god Cupide,
 Aduē my Ladies, so fresh so wel beseyn:
 For agayn[s] Death nothyng may abyde,
 And windes great gon down with litle rein. 448

Death speaketh to the Gentlewoman.

COME forth Maistresse, of yeres yonge and grene,
 Which hold your selfe of beautie souereyn,
 As fayre as ye was whilom Pollixene,
 Penelope and the quene Helein. 452
 Yet on this daunce thei went[e] both[e] tweyne,
 And so shall ye, for al your straungenesse;
 Thogh* daunger long in loue hath lad your rein,
 Arested is your change of doublenes. 456

The Gentlewoman maketh answer.

OCRUEL Death, that spareth none estate,
 To old and yong thou art indifferent;
 To my beautie thou hast said checkmate,
 So hasty is thy mortail iudgement. 460
 For in my youth[e] this was mine entent,
 To my seruike many man to haue lured;
 But she is a foole, shortly in sent[e]ment,
 That in her beautie is to muche assured. 464

Death speaketh to the Man of Law.

SYR Aduocate, short proces for to make,
 Ye mot come plete afore the* high[e] iudge.
 Many a quarel* ye haue vndertake
 And for lucre done to folke refuge; 468
 But my fraunchise is so large and huge
 That counsaile none auaille may but trouthe:
 He scapeth wisely of death the great deluge,
 Tofore the dome who is nought teint with slouth. 472

The Man of Law maketh answer.

OF right & reason by Natures law,
 I can nought putte against Deth no defence,
 Ne by my* sleight me kepen or withdraw,
 For al my wit and al* my gret prudence,* 476

439. al] al your H.

442. Against T. 444. of pride] the prouide T.

455. Thogh] Yf T — hath] haue H. 462. lured] alleurede H.

462. sentement] sentence H. 466. the] that H.

467. a quarel] quarels T. 468. done to] to do H.

474. nought] om. H — putte] putten T. 475 is transposed

after 477 T. 475. Ne by my] Nother by no T — or] ne H.

476. and al] and H, for al T.

To [make] appeale from his dredful sentence;
 Nor nothyng in earth may a man preserue,
 Agayn his might to make resistance:
 God quiteth all men like as they deserue. 480

Death speaketh to Maister John Rikil Tregetour.

MASTER John Rikil, whilom Tregetour
 Of noble Henry king of Eng[e]lond,
 And of Fraunce the mightie conquerour, —
 For al the sleightes and turning of thine hond, 484
 Thou must come nere my daunce to vnderstand.
 Nought may auayle al thy conclusions;
 For Death, shortly, nother on sea ne lond,
 Is not deceiued by none illusions. 488

The Tregetour maketh aunswer.

WHAT may auayle magike naturall
 Or any craft shewed by apparence,
 Or course of starres aboute celestiall,
 Or of the heauens al the influence 492
 Ageynes* Death to stonde at defence?
 Legerdmain now helpeth me right nought.
 Fare wel my craft and [al] such sapience;
 For Death hath mo maistries than I haue wrought.* 496

Death speaketh to the Person.

OSIR Curate, that been now here present,
 That had your worldly inclinacion,
 Your heart entere, your study & entent,
 Most of your tithes and* oblacion, 500
 Which should haue be of conuersacion
 Mirrour to other, light and examplarie, —
 Like your desert[e] shalbe your guerdon,
 And to eche* labour due is the salarye. 504

The Person maketh aunswere.

MAUGER my wil I must[e] condescende;
 For death assaileth every liuely thing
 Here in this world[e], who can comprehend
 His sodein stroke and his vnware commyng,* 508
 Fare wel [my] tithes, and fare wel mine offering, —
 I mot go coumpten in* order by and by,
 And for my shepe make a iust reckonynge:
 Whom he acquiteth* I hold he is happye. 512

479. make] make no H.

481. *This stanza is transposed in H, following the Minstral.*

485. my] this H. 487. ne] and H.

492. the heauens] heuen H. 493. Ageynes] Against T.

496.] For Death mo maistries hath ywrought T — wrought]
 wronge H. 500. and] and your T. 504. eche] every T.

508. commyng] turnyng T.

510. in] by T.

512. Whom he acquiteth] & who that so him quiteth T.

Death speaketh to the Iurrouer.

MAISTER Iurrouer, which that at assises
 And at sheres questes dydst embrace,
 Departist* lond like to thy deuises,
 And who most gaue most stode in thy grace: 516
 The poore man lost both[e] land and place;
 For golde thou couldest folke disherite.
 But now let se, with thy teynt[e] face
 Tofore the Iudge how [thou] canst thee quite! 520

The Iurrouer maketh aunswere.

WHILOM I was cleped in my countrey
 The belweather, and that was not alite.
 Nought loued but drad of high & low degree;
 For whom me list by craft, I could endite, — 524
 Hongen the true and the thefe respite:
 Al the countrey by my worde was lad.
 But I dare sein, shortly for to write,
 Of my death many a man is glad. 528

Death speaketh to the Minstral.

O THOU Minstrall, that can so note and pipe
 Unto folke[s] for to done pleasaunce,
 By thi* ryght honde anone I shall the gripe,
 With these other to gone vpon my daunce; 532
 There is no scape nother auoydaunce,
 On no syde to contraire* my sentence:
 For in musike by craft and accordaunce
 Who maister is [shal] shewen his science.* 536

The Minstrall maketh aunswere.

THIS new[e] daunce is to me so straunge,
 Wonder diuers and passingly contrarye;
 The dredefull footyng doth so oft[e] chaunge
 And the mesures so oft[e] tymes* varye, 540
 Which now to me is nothyng* necessarye.
 If it wer so that I might asterte!
 But many a man, if I shal nought tary,
 Oft [tyme] daunseth, but nothyng of hert. 544

Death speaketh to the Labourer.

THOU Labourer, which in sorowe and peyn
 Hast lad thy life in [ful] great trauayle,
 Ye must eke daunce and therfore nought disdein;
 For if thou do, it may the nought auayle. 548
 And cause why that I thee assayle
 Is onely this: from thee to disceuer
 The false world that can so folkes fayle;
 He is a foole that weneth to liuen euer. 552

513. at] is at H.

515. Departest] Deper didst T — deuises] devise H.

529. can] canst H. 531. thi] the T.

534. contraire] contune T. 536. science] sentence T.

540. tymes] sith T. 541. now to me is] vnto me is now T.

545. Thou] O thou H. 548. if] thoghe H.

552. liuen] liue H.

The Labourer maketh aunswere.

I HAUE wished after Death ful oft,
 Albe that I would haue fled him nowe.
 I had leauer to haue lyen vnsoft,
 In wind & rain to haue gon at the plowe, 556
 With spade & pikoys labored for my prowē,
 Doluen and ditched and at the cart[e] gone:
 For I may say and tell[e] platlye howe,
 In this worlde there is rest[e] none. 560

Death speaketh to the Frere Menour.

SYR Cordelere, to you mine hande is raught,
 To* this daunce [you] to conuay & leade,
 Which in your preaching han ful oft ytaught
 How that I am most gastful for to drede, 564
 Albe that folke take thereto none hede.
 Yet is there none so strong ne so hardye,
 But Death dare hym rest and let for no mede;
 For Death yche* houre is present and ready. 568

The Frere maketh aunswere.

WHAT may this be, that in this world no man
 Here to abide may haue no suretie?
 Strength, riches, nor what so that he can
 Of worldly wisdom; all is but vanitie! 572
 In great estate nor in pouertie
 Is nothing founde that may from* death defend;
 For which I saye to high and low degree,
 Wise is the* sinner that doth his lyfe amēd. 576

Death speaketh to the Chylde.

LITTLE Faunte, that were but late borne,
 Shape in this worlde to haue no pleasaunce,
 Ye must with other, that gone here beforne,
 Be lad in hast by fatall ordinaunce. 580
 Learne ouer* new to gone [up]on my daunce:
 There may none age escape in soth therefro.
 Let euery wight haue this in remembraunce,
 Who lengest liueth most shal suffer woe. 584

The Yong Childe maketh aunswer.

A A a, a woorde I cannot speake;
 I am so yonge; I was borne yesterday.
 Death is so hasty on me to be wreake,
 And list no lenger to make no delaie. 588
 I come but now,* and now I go my way;
 Of me no more tale* shall [ye] be told.
 The wyl of God no man withstonde maye;
 As soone dyerh a yong [man] as an olde. 592

555. haue] haue had H. 557. labored] haue labored H.
 558. ditched] dyke H. 560. there] here there H.
 562. To] You to H. 563. oft taught H.
 567. dare hym rest] dar arest him H. 568. yche] euery T.
 574. from] his T. 576. the] that T. 577. Enfante H.
 579. Ye] thou H. 581. ouer] of T. 585. A a a] A A a H.
 589. I come but now] I am but now borne T.
 590. tale] to tale T.

Death speaketh to the Yong Clerke.

O YE, Syr Clerke, suppose ye to be free
 Fro my daunce or your selfe defende,
 That wend haue risen vnto high degree
 Of benefice or some great prebende? 596
 Who climbeth highest sometime shal descend.
 Let no man grutche ayeines* his fortune,
 But take at gree what-euer God him sende,
 Which punisheth al when time is oportune. 600

The Clerke maketh aunswere.

SHALL [I] that am so yong a clerke now die,
 Fro* my seruice & haue no bet guerdon?
 Is there no gayn[e] ne no better way,
 No seurer* fraunchise nor proteccion? 604
 Death maketh alway a short conclusion;
 To late ware, when men been on the brynke:
 The world shall fayle and all possession;
 For much faileth of thing that foles* thinke. 608

Death speaketh to the Hermite.

YE that haue liued long in wildernes
 And there continued long in abstinence,
 At the last[e] yet ye mot you dresse,
 Of my daunce to haue experience; 612
 For there against may be* no resistance.
 Take now leaue of thyne hermitage:
 W[h]erfore yeche* man aduert to this sentence,
 That [in] this life is* no sure heritage. 616

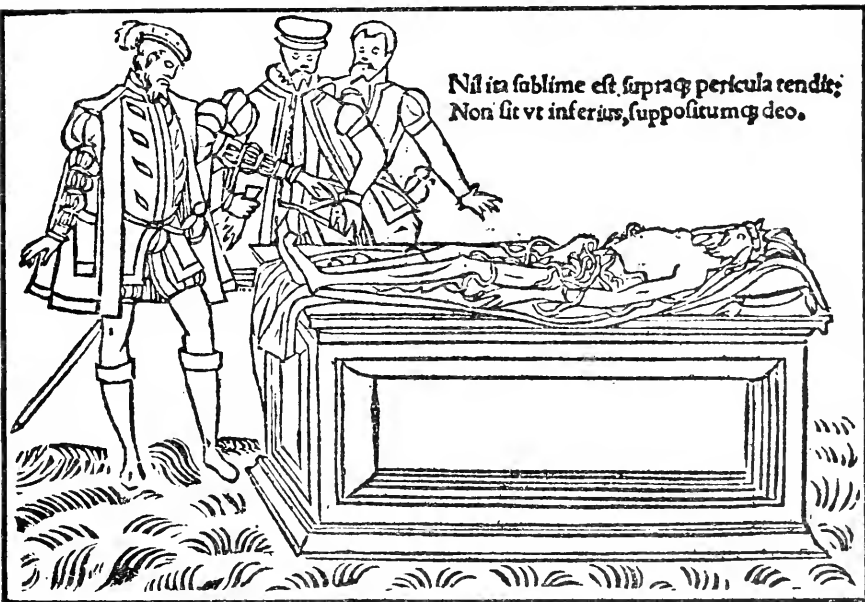
The Hermite maketh aunswere.

TO liue in desert called solitarie
 May again Death haue respite none nor space;
 At vnset houre his comying doth not tary,
 And for my part welcom by Goddes grace, 620
 Thankyng hym with humble chere & face
 Of al his giftes and great haboundaunce,
 Finally affirmyng in this place,
 No man is riche that lacketh suffraunce. 624

Death speaketh agayn to the Hermite.

THAT is wel sayd, and thus should euery wight
 Thanken his God & al his wittes dresse
 To loue & dread him *witb* all his heart & might,
 Sith Death to escape maye be no sikernes. 628
 As men deserue, God quiteth of rightwisnes
 To riche and poore vpon euery syde:
 A better lesson there can no clerke expresse,
 Than til to-morow is no man sure to abide. 632

597. highest] hie H. 598. ayeines] ayeinst T.
 599. in gree H. 602. Fro] Of T — bet] better T.
 604. seurer] better T — nor] ne H. 608. foles] folkes T.
 613. may be] is T. 615. yeche] euery T — to] *om.* H.
 616. is] here is T. 617. To liue] Lyff H.
 619. hour] stewyne H. 624. suffraunce] suffisaunce T.
 629. quiteth] quite H. 630. To] The H.



¶ The King liggig eaten of Wormes.

YE folke that loke vpon this portrature,
 Beholding here all estates daunce,
 Seeth what ye been & what is your nature:
 Meat vnto wormes; nought els in substaunce. 636
 And haueth this mirroure aye in remembraunce,
 Howe I lye here whylom crowned [a] kyng,
 To al estates a true resemblaunce,
 That wormes foode is* fine of our* liuyng. 640

¶ Machabree the Doctoure.

MANS lyfe* is nought els, platly for to thinke,
 But as [a] wind[e] which is transitory,
 Passing ay forth, whether he wake or winke,
 Toward this daunce, haueth this in memorye, 644
 Remembryng aye there is no better victory
 In this life here than fle syn at the least;
 Than shal ye reygne in paradise with glorye.
 Happy is he that maketh in heauen his feast! 648

Yet been there folkemo than sixe or seuen,
 Recheles of life in many maner wyse,
 Like as there were hell[e] none nor heauen.
 Such false errour let euery man despise; 652

633. folkene H.

634. Beholdithe H. 637. haue H — aye] euer H.

640. is] is the T — our] your T.

641. Mans lyfe] Man is T, Man is life H — els] om. H.

648. in heuen that maketh H. 652. errors H.

The Daunce of Machabree

For holy saynctes and olde clerkes wyse
 Written contrary, her falsenes to deface:*
 To liuen wel, take* for the best emprise,
 Is much[e] worth when men shall* hence passe. 656

¶ *Lenuoye of the Translatoure.*

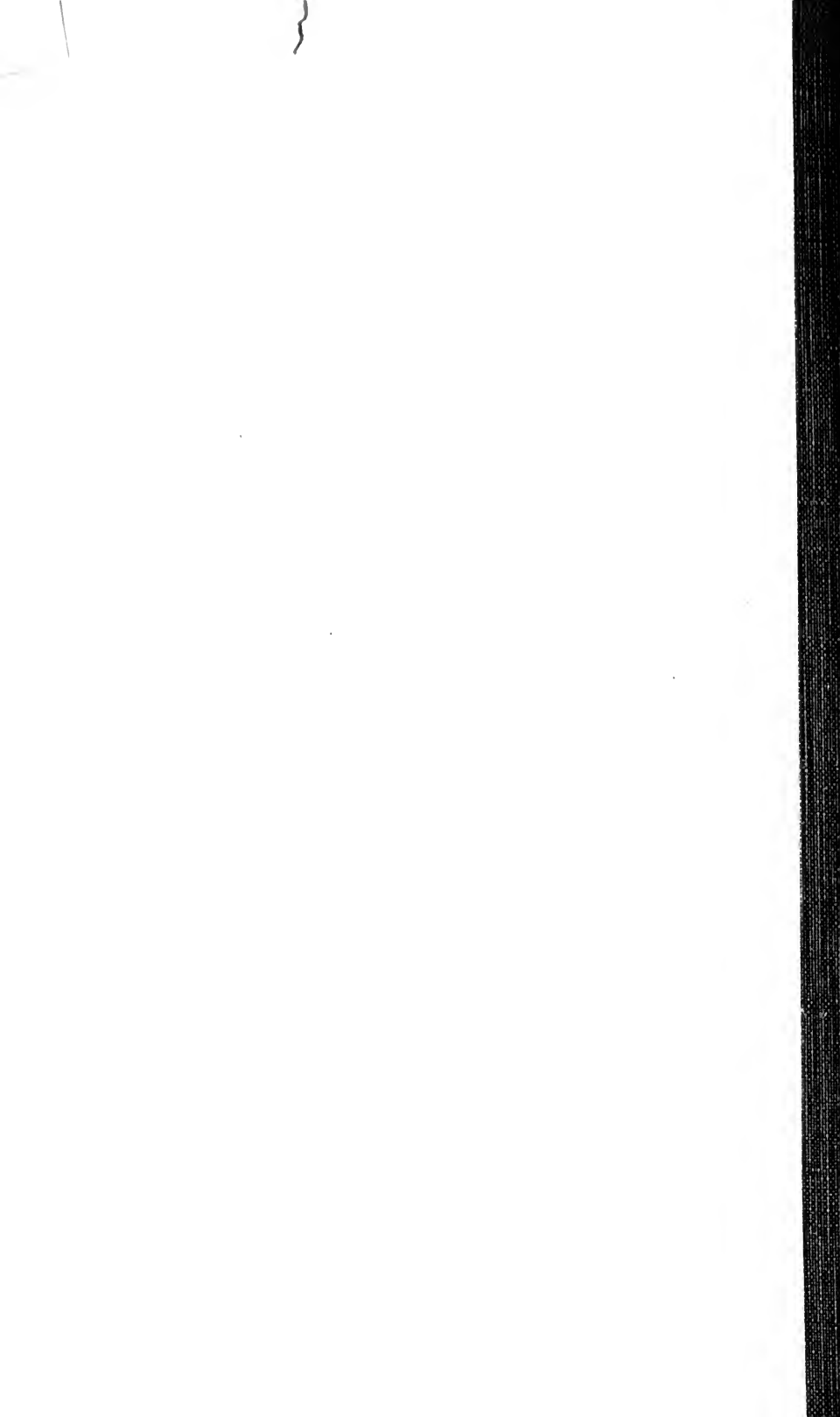
O YE my lordes & maisters all in fere,*
 Of auenture that shal this daunce reade,
 Lowely I pray with all myne heart entere
 To correct[e] where-as ye se nede; 660
 For nought elles I aske for my mede
 But goodly support of this translacion,
 And with fauour to suppowaille drede,
 Bening[e]lye in your correccioun. 664

Out of the French I drough it of entent,
 Not word by word but folowing in substaunce,
 And from Paris to Eng[e]land it sent,
 Only of purpose you to do plesaunce. 668
 Rude of langage, I was not borne in France, —
 Haue me excused, my name is Iohn Lidgate;*
 Of ther tong I haue no suffisance,
 Her curious miters in Englishe to translate. 672

¶ *Here endeth the Daunce of Machabree.*

654. deface] defame T.
 655. lyue H — take] take thys T.
 656. shall] should T.
 657. my lordes & maisters] maistres and folkes H — fere]
 feare T.
 667 and 668 are transposed in T.
 669 and 670 are transposed in T. 669. ther] other T.





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